

UTOPIAN HORIZONS

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

UTOPIAN HORIZONS

Ideology, Politics, Literature

Edited by
ZSOLT CZIGÁNYIK



Central European University Press
Budapest–New York

Copyright © by Zsolt Czigányik 2017

Published in 2017 by

Central European University Press

An imprint of the

Central European University Limited Liability Company

Nádor utca 11, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary

Tel: +36-1-327-3138 or 327-3000

Fax: +36-1-327-3183

E-mail: ceupress@press.ceu.edu

Website: www.ceupress.com

224 West 57th Street, New York NY 10019, USA

Tel: +1-732-763-8816

E-mail: meszarosa@press.ceu.edu

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted,
in any form or by any means, without the permission
of the Publisher.

ISBN 978-963-386-181-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Czigányik, Zsolt, 1974- editor.

Title: Utopian horizons : ideology, politics, literature / edited by Zsolt Czigányik.

Description: Budapest ; New York : Central European University Press, [2017]

Identifiers: LCCN 2016045928 (print) | LCCN 2017000848 (ebook) |

ISBN 9789633861813 (hardcover) | ISBN 9789633861820

Subjects: LCSH: Utopias. | Utopias—Social aspects. | Utopias—Political aspects.

Classification: LCC HX806 .U79325 2017 (print) | LCC HX806 (ebook) |

DDC 335/.02—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016045928>

Printed in Hungary by
Prime Rate Kft., Budapest

Table of Contents

List of Figures	vii
Introduction – Utopianism: Literary and Political <i>Zsolt Czigányik</i>	1

PART ONE Utopia with a Political Focus

Ideology and Utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur <i>Lyman Tower Sargent</i>	19
When Does Utopianism Produce Dystopia? <i>Gregory Claeys</i>	41
From the Political Utopia to the Philosophical Utopia—and Rescuing the Political Utopia, on Second Thought <i>Fátima Vieira</i>	63
Third Way Utopianism: Anarcho-Democratic and Liberal Socialist Ideas in Central Europe <i>András Bozóki and Miklós Sükösd</i>	77
George Orwell, Soviet Studies, and the “Soviet Subjectivity” Debate <i>Dmitry Halavach</i>	103

PART TWO
Utopia with a Literary Focus

Marxist Utopianism and Modern Irish Drama, 1884–1904: William Morris, W. B. Yeats, and G. B. Shaw <i>Eglantina Rempört</i>	121
Civil Religion as Utopian Ideology: A Case Study of H. G. Wells <i>Károly Pintér</i>	145
Negative Utopia in Central Europe: <i>Kazohinia</i> and the Dystopian Political Climate of the 1930s <i>Zsolt Czigányik</i>	161
What They Were Going to Do About It: Huxley's Peace Pamphlet in Pre-War Hungary <i>Ákos Farkas</i>	181
The City in Ruins: Post-9/11 Representations of Cataclysmic New York on Film <i>Vera Benczik</i>	201
Realism and Utopianism Reconsidered: A Political Theoretical Reading of <i>A Song of Ice and Fire</i> <i>Zoltán Gábor Szűcs</i>	219
Afterword <i>Zsolt Czigányik</i>	239
List of contributors	249
Index	251

List of Figures

Figure 1. The Fountain of Hungarian Justice in Budapest. (Photograph by Balázs P. Farkas, December 2014.)	187
Figure 2. Transatlantic flight “Justice for Hungary.” (Source: Wikimedia.)	191

INTRODUCTION

Utopianism: Literary and Political

ZSOLT CZIGÁNYIK

In 2016 we celebrated the five-hundredth anniversary of Thomas More's *Utopia*. The year 1516 is significant, even though it marks only the birth of a neologism and a literary genre that evolved into a very rich tradition, while utopian thought, the ability to think in alternatives about human life, is probably as old as human thinking itself. Utopia has always been in the no man's land between literature and the social sciences: literary works, including utopias, are often ignored by the social sciences, while works of imaginary literature are sometimes used as illustrations. This volume tries to look at utopian literature as a source of genuine political understanding.¹ Simultaneously, literary scholars often criticize (and even ignore) utopias for their dubious literary qualities and their lack of well-developed characters, genuine conflicts, and complex narratives. As we can see, the context for the interpretation of utopias is not unproblematic, and there have been drastic changes in the way the subject of utopia is discussed, from the wholesale rejection of utopian projects by both Friedrich Engels and Karl Popper to the contemporary recognition of utopia as a dynamizing force in the social sciences, as reflected by the 2012 annual meeting of the American Sociological Association entitled "Real Utopias: Emancipatory Projects, Institutional Designs, Possible Futures."²

Utopianism can significantly contribute to the understanding and improvement of human life, but the understanding of utopia needs to

¹ Cf. Maureen Whitebrook, "Politics and Literature?," *Politics* 15, no. 1 (1995): 55–62.

² See http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/2012_am_final_program_c_optimized.pdf

involve a number of disciplines, in the realms of both the humanities and the social sciences. The endeavor of this volume is precisely to bring together scholars of different fields who attempt to understand the literary, social, and political aspects of utopianism, forming (or rather revealing) links among each other's disciplines and methods, and receiving insight from others' approaches in understanding both utopia and ideology. To this end, a workshop was organized in Budapest under the auspices of the Central European University's Institute for Advanced Study in cooperation with the Humanities Initiative in 2014, and the work done during that meeting developed into further cooperation and interaction. The chapters of the present volume represent the openness of their writers to receiving impulses from other disciplines. The word "interdisciplinary" has often been used and abused, yet I am convinced that this volume also proves that utopian studies is a proper intersection—or as I prefer to call it, meeting place—for the humanities and social sciences, disciplines that essentially belong together yet far too often are seen in opposition, or worse, alien to one another and disinterested in each other's efforts.

Utopia: Fact and Fiction

Utopia is not only a literary genre, and this volume does not take a primarily literary approach. Literature, and particularly fictionality, has appeared as a problem, and literary works have often been rejected as sources of knowledge since Plato banned poets from the ideal Republic. It has been argued by many ever since that fiction is devoid of any truth value; it may be a source of entertainment, but need not occupy much place in serious discussions—especially not in the social sciences, which deal with facts, not fiction. Realistic fiction, whose settings and subject matters are closely linked to historical and social reality, is also often considered to lack truth value, even when they frequently appear as examples or illustrations of the corresponding historical periods. The basis of this usage is that even if a fictional world appears as a separate system from historical reality, it is "dependent on [a] cultural-historical reality in which it is created and with which it holds more or less obvious affinities."³ Yet can one expect scholars to take seriously such counterfac-

³ Ruth Ronen, *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 15.

tuals as utopias that deal with non-existing societies that are by definition nowhere to be found?

There is more than one way of looking at fictional texts. George Steiner considers the capability of human language to express non-existent states of affairs, for instance, wishes and conditional or future sentences, a unique ability that makes human culture exceptional: “We endure, we endure creatively due to our imperative ability to say ‘No’ to reality, to build fictions of alterity, of dreamt or willed or awaited ‘otherness’ for our consciousness to inhabit. It is in this precise sense that the utopian and the messianic are figures of syntax.”⁴ Steiner finds the unique capability to discuss fictional states, such as the future, as a general human ability and necessity, not as something extraordinary that belongs only to the realm of arts and literature. The same claim is advanced by Ruth Ronen when she argues that fictionality is not only a specific feature of the literary text, but an aspect of human existence.⁵ The relationship between fiction and reality is not only a question of literary studies, but involves a common human experience of referring to non-actual states or events (in dreams, wishes, memories, etc.). We could not live our lives without references to things and events that do not (yet) exist—for instance, what we are going to do tomorrow. Similarly, utopia is an expression of the importance of the non-actual.

Fictionality, as we have seen, is traditionally contrasted with factuality, as are literary works with historical accounts. Yet the works of historians, and also those of social scientists, share many important features with fiction. In establishing a distinct relationship between literature and politics, Jacques Rancière refers to Aristotle, claiming that according to the ancient philosopher poetry is “more ‘philosophical’ than history because poetry builds causal plots binding events together in a whole, while history only tells the events as they evolve.”⁶ This cohesive nature of epic poetry (and fictional literature in the modern era) is also recognized by modern historiographers; Hayden White, for instance, underlines the parallel aspects of

⁴ George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (New York: Open Media, 2013), 12. Also referred to in Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan, “Dystopia and Histories,” in *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, ed. Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan (London: Routledge, 2003), 236.

⁵ Ronen, *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory*, 2.

⁶ Jacques Rancière, “The Politics of Literature,” *SubStance* 33, no. 1 (2004): 13.

writing fictional and real histories.⁷ He emphasizes that the chronological sequence of events is not a satisfactory form of historical narrative: "The events must be not only registered within the chronological framework of their original occurrence but narrated as well, that is to say, revealed as possessing a structure, an order of meaning, that they do not possess as a mere sequence."⁸ A writer of fiction generally tries to produce a coherent narrative, and if historians (and political scientists or sociologists, one may add) aim at finding coherent patterns in the reality that they examine, there is an underlying similarity in the framework of their endeavors. To achieve coherence "a historical thinker chooses conceptual strategies by which to explain or represent his data. On this level, I believe, the historian performs an essentially *poetic* act, in which he *prefigures* the historical field and constitutes it as a domain upon which to bring to bear the specific theories he will use to explain 'what was *really* happening' in it."⁹ The poetic act of prefiguration links the social scientist to the writer, yet naturally there are basic differences as well. Historians are generally disinterested in hypothetical persons and events, and their endeavor is to link actual events into a coherent structure; a writer of fiction enjoys remarkable freedom in using fictive characters and settings. The historian also endeavors to reveal or "find" the coherence of events, rather than the writer of fiction, who may create it.¹⁰ The conclusion we can draw from White's argument is that a sharp distinction between literary and historical narratives, and in a valid extension, between literary narratives and the narratives of the social sciences in general, disregards important common elements. Literary studies is capable of analyzing and interpreting the peculiarities of the narrative nature of representations of reality offered by the social sciences. To have a fuller understanding of social phenomena, several approaches, hence several disciplines, are needed. The complexities that arise during the interpretation of utopias makes the necessity of cooperation between literary and social sciences explicit, just as the fruits that emerge out of such cooperation make it worthwhile, as this volume demonstrates.

⁷ See especially Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). See also Hayden White, *The Content of the Form* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987) and "Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality," *Rethinking History* 9, nos. 2–3 (June–September 2005): 147–57.

⁸ White, *The Content of the Form*, 5.

⁹ White, *Metahistory*, x.

¹⁰ Cf. White, *The Content of the Form*, 21.

The interdisciplinary nature of our endeavor implies that the present volume discusses utopia not (or not only) as a literary term. Many scholars draw our attention to the fact that literary representations of utopia form only one aspect of a broader concept of *utopianism*. This concept has three equally important aspects: beyond the literary representations of utopianism one also has to take into consideration intentional communities (utopian practice) and the utopian aspects of political theory.¹¹ In Lyman Tower Sargent's wording, "utopianism refers to the dreams and nightmares that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which usually envision a radically different society from the one in which the dreamers live. And utopianism, unlike much social theory, focuses on everyday life as well as matters concerned with economic, political and social questions."¹² As we have seen above, dreaming, just like fiction in general, should not be dismissed as unimportant, childish, or marginal. In George Steiner's view, it is one of the chief manifestations of being human and the key to our survival. Thus, although the essentially human capacity for creating counterfactual constructions is manifested in literary utopias, the literary aspect of utopianism, though important, should not be the sole aspect of the investigation. Dreamers mould their dreams into either literary, practical, or theoretical forms, and these three forms often interact with each other. A literary utopia may have important theoretical implications that are also relevant to the social scientist, and may motivate the establishment of an intentional community, whose experiences in turn may become the object of social studies, just to mention a few of the possible configurations. The present volume concerns itself primarily with the interaction of the literary element and utopian political theory, which focuses on the social, political, and economic aspects of how human life could be better.

An important issue to be addressed before one can meaningfully talk about utopias is linked to the original ambiguity of the term. The Greek neologism, invented by Thomas More five hundred years ago, may refer to either no place or a good place. In either case, utopia is meant to be an alternative reality that is significantly different and usually significantly better than the life experienced by the author (and, presumably, the readers). Our experience, however, shows that the utopian reality

¹¹ For more details see Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37.

¹² Lyman Tower Sargent, *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 5.

described in a given work is very often undesirable, and usually one does not even presume that it was intended to be desirable by its creator. Ambiguity is an inevitable constituent of the term, and this ambiguity is often considered to be one of the greatest virtues of utopia. As Miguel Abensour argues, a dogmatic reading is prevented by utopia's constant oscillation between *eutopia* and *outopia*, the "good place" and the "no place."¹³ A further point of this interpretative oscillation is the "bad place," the negative utopia or dystopia, an alternative reality that is not only nonexistent, but also explicitly not desired. Utopia's power and attraction is fueled by this creative and beneficial ambiguity, even if that makes its interpretation more difficult.

Furthermore, there is no agreement amongst scholars as to how the intention of the author is to be taken into consideration. This uncertainty arises mainly from the interdisciplinary nature of utopian studies: whereas the author for most social scientists is an unproblematic concept, twentieth-century traditions of literary studies look at authorial intentions as a particularly problematic field. To give a detailed account of this issue would go beyond the confines of this introduction, but some considerations must be stated. New Criticism, a major movement in literary criticism in the 1930s and 1940s, established the autonomy of the literary work and regarded the interpretation of a work of literature based on its author's intentions as misguided. Its proponents stated that such intentions are partly dubious, partly irrelevant: what should guide interpretation is the text itself, independent of the psychology and biography of the author.¹⁴ This view remained influential and gained new impetus by the appearance of postmodern theories emphasizing the role of intertextuality, particularly in the works of Roland Barthes. In his influential 1968 essay, "The Death of the Author," Barthes claimed that "the text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture," thus relativizing the role of the author and especially his or her interpretative authority over the text.¹⁵ The writer for Barthes is not the origin of the text, but a "scriptor" providing "a multi-dimensional space in which

¹³ Miguel Abensour, "Persistent Utopia," *Constellations* 15, no. 3 (2008): 406.

¹⁴ The most iconic paper expounding this view is W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3 (July–September 1946): 468–88.

¹⁵ Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. S. Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 146. Originally published as "La Mort de l'auteur," *Manteia* 5 (1968): 12–17.

a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash.”¹⁶ This multiplicity called the text may be disentangled by no one else but the reader, who becomes the center of the process of interpretation. Since Barthes and the New Critics, the traditional concept of the author as an all-knowing source of the text cannot be redeemed, though current trends in literary scholarship do not necessarily reject referring to the author or discussing his or her role in the creation of the text. This is at least partly due to the fact that the author is dead neither to popular culture, nor consequently to the majority of the readers. Unless literary scholars intend to hide in an ivory tower, the issue of the author needs to be addressed, even if it is no longer the unproblematic concept it may have appeared to be, not only to non-professional readers, but also to social scientists.

In the interpretation of utopias, literary studies also needs some adjustment away from particularly strong attitudes in postmodernism, attitudes that M. H. Abrams calls the “isolation” of literature. This approach “regards the work of art in isolation from all . . . external points of reference, analyzes it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations and sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being.”¹⁷ Besides the noted concerns about the role of the author, post-structuralism’s rejection of the referentiality of the text and the mimetic function of literature makes the relevance of literature for the social sciences appear problematic. If one accepts the primacy of an aesthetics that severs the literary work not only from its author, but from all external references, the social scientist naturally and logically withdraws. While there is no intention here to discredit literary approaches that consider extratextual references marginal or irrelevant, it is suggested that the analysis of certain genres of literature, particularly satire and utopia, calls for the acknowledgement of the external referentiality of the text. A work of art that criticizes a certain political reality will not be fully understood unless that reality is taken into consideration.

The present volume will interpret works of dystopia, or negative utopia, as parts of the literary tradition of utopianism. The existence of two terms suggests two different concepts, or genres in the literary context, and hence that they could be treated separately, but this volume opts for emphasizing their common elements. Dystopia is an even younger term

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 25.

than utopia. It is popularly believed that the former term was coined by John Stuart Mill in 1868 (and the *Wikipedia* entry “Dystopia” supports this belief), yet it appeared in print in English as early as the mid-eighteenth century, and not only as an isolated occurrence.¹⁸ Dystopia is usually seen as the negative counterpart, or as Krishan Kumar puts it, the “shadow” of utopia.¹⁹ He also claims that this “shadow” has been present ever since utopias existed, and “so close are the genres that it is not always clear what is a utopia and what a dystopia.”²⁰ The difference often does not depend on the author’s intention (a rather problematic concept anyway, as discussed above), but the readers’ interpretations. Many distinct utopias (including More’s eponymous piece) have been considered dystopias, but at the same time, “American college students of the 1950s and 1960s found Aldous Huxley’s dystopia *Brave New World*, with its easy availability of sex and drugs, a distinct utopia.”²¹

The narrative, either in the case of a utopia or a dystopia, reflects on the present social-political context of the author, yet in a fictional reality that is isolated from the actual historical context. This isolation or displacement of the narrative is either spatial (in a nonexistent space, such as on an unknown island in More’s *Utopia* or Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis*), or temporal (in a nonexistent time, such as in the future). The latter version became overwhelmingly popular in the twentieth century and often gives the false impression of claiming to describe the political and social conditions of the future, and therefore of being prophetic in nature. This is a common misunderstanding; a civilization’s conception of the future is of great importance in shaping the actions people take, yet neither utopia nor dystopia is capable of directly describing the future. However, they both reflect on the present in a critical manner, and from this point of view it is irrelevant whether they depict an attractive or an abominable alterna-

¹⁸ For more details see Vesselin Budakov, “Dystopia: An Earlier Eighteenth-Century Use,” *Notes and Queries* 57, no. 1 (2010): 86–88.

¹⁹ Krishan Kumar, “Utopia’s Shadow,” in *Dystopia(n) Matters*, ed. Fátima Vieira (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), 19–22.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

²¹ *Ibid.* Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* also generated followers who looked at the life of the protagonist as a hedonistic utopia, whereas the fourth book of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, which features the land of the Houyhnhnms, the rational horses, has fueled a debate since its publication in 1726 over whether it is to be interpreted as an enlightened utopia, or the opposite of it—a bitter satire of the overwhelming rule of the intellect.

tive. The satirical edge is present in both positive and negative utopia: an alternative is presented to the existing social-political reality because it is considered to be unsatisfactory.

Modern dystopias often reflect on the great dictatorial regimes and ideologies of the twentieth century—fascism, Nazism, and communism—all of which have a utopian ideology at their respective roots. This fact understandably gave a suspicious shade to any form of utopianism. In the terms of literary theorist Northrop Frye, there occurred “something of a paralysis of utopian thought and imagination” due to the disaster of communism, “the most influential utopia of political thought.”²² Despite Karl Mannheim’s cautiously positive analysis of certain aspects of utopianism (see the first chapter of this volume), this paralysis and suspicion seemed to prevail in the second part of the twentieth century.²³ A symbolic and influential figure of this intellectual trend is Karl Popper, whose 1945 book *The Open Society and Its Enemies* notably contrasted “piecemeal social engineering” to “Utopian social engineering.” The former means that social action is directed cautiously at one goal at a time with readjustments if the situation so requires. By utopian social engineering, Popper meant that a preconceived idea of the good is forced upon society. This contrast of two kinds of social engineering, however influential, is considered rather unfortunate by a number of critics, especially as it is based on the identification of utopias with blueprints, that is, detailed plans for social change, whereas most utopias are *not* written or read “with the intent of implementing them in detail.”²⁴ This antiutopian attitude is also reflected in the words of Leszek Kołakowski, who claimed that any “Utopia which purports to offer a technical blueprint for the perfect society now strikes me as pregnant with the most terrible dangers. . . . To go to the length of imagining that we can design some plan for the whole of society whereby harmony, justice and plenty are attained by human engineering is an

²² Northrop Frye, “Varieties of Literary Utopias,” in *The Stubborn Structure* (London: Methuen, 1980), 114.

²³ The conservative response is even more dismissive. Cf. Thomas Molnar, *Utopia: The Perennial Heresy* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967). Another factor is postmodernism’s famous incredulity toward grand narratives (See Jean-François Lyotard), and utopia (a utopian future) may appear as a grand narrative in this context. This aversion may also be one of the reasons for the popularity of dystopias.

²⁴ Lyman Tower Sargent, “Authority & Utopia: Utopianism in Political Thought,” *Polity* 14, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 570.

invitation for despotism. I would, then, retain Utopia as an imaginative incentive.”²⁵ These extremely cautious thoughts (quite understandable after the fall of the Nazi regime and in the political context of the Cold War with the planned economies of socialist countries) resulted in an intellectual climate of rejection of utopianism by the social sciences for much of twentieth century.

In the twenty-first century it is easier to agree with Frye, who calls for the critical reactivation of utopia. Already in 1965 he claimed that it was time to rediscover “the real strength and importance of the utopian imagination both for literature and for life. . . . Utopian thought is imaginative, with its roots in literature, and . . . less concerned with achieving ends than with visualizing possibilities.”²⁶ Thus utopianism may serve as a dynamizing force of social sciences, provided we understand that there are two sides of the coin called imagination: it may be unrealistic or infeasible, but it has potential positive effects as well, such as offering new opportunities and allowing for breaking the rules of monolithic and static ideologies.

The structure of this volume is meant to reflect clearly both the logical configuration of the problems arising when one tries to discover modern utopianism, and the interests of the contributing researchers with their specific perspectives. During the editorial process it became clear that the converging elements within the individual chapters reveal an internal coherence of subject. The first chapter is dedicated to the political aspects and the theoretical background of the investigations that follow, in which the doyen of utopian studies, Lyman Tower Sargent, reconsiders his 2008 article on the relationship of political ideology and the concept of utopia. Karl Mannheim’s *Ideology and Utopia* distinguishes between two types of ideology, the particular and the total, the latter expressing the structure of thought of a whole epoch or a group. Whereas ideology is the central question for Mannheim, utopia is presented as a problematic concept. Unless it presents unreal options for the future, utopia is shown to reveal possible solutions to the problems presented by ideology. Sargent also reflects on Mannheim’s later publications and maps recent reflections on Mannheim’s work. Moreover, he sets the discussion of Mannheim in parallel with the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur’s treatment of utopia. Utopia, in Ricoeur’s view, if grounded in reality, is an opportunity to criti-

²⁵ George Urban, “The Devil in History: A Conversation with Leszek Kołakowski,” *Encounter* 56, no. 1 (January 1981): 12.

²⁶ Northrop Frye, “Varieties of Literary Utopias,” 109–34, quoted in Letizia Modena, *Italo Calvino’s Architecture of Lightness* (London: Routledge, 2011), 46.

cize and even undermine ideology from an outward position. While most scholarly reflection of both thinkers focuses on ideology, Sargent demonstrates that utopia is of central importance in both of their systems. And while utopia is understood by neither of them as a literary concept (in fact, literary utopias are hardly ever considered), Sargent argues that ideologies also influence utopian literature. In the final part of the chapter (added specifically for the purposes of this volume), Sargent claims that even when Mannheim's and Ricoeur's arguments cannot be straightforwardly applied to literary works, their approaches may be utilized if distinctions are delicately observed.

Gregory Claeys takes a different angle when reflecting on the relationship of utopianism and political ideology, concentrating on the alleged negative impact of utopia on political thought as seen in the twentieth-century cases of fascism, Nazism, and Stalinism. While Karl Popper and others explicitly rejected utopianism for its inherent dangers in producing totalitarian regimes, Claeys distinguishes thirteen different kinds of utopian projections, and while taking Popper's charges seriously, argues that utopianism is dangerous if, and only if, it is connected to political religion. He demonstrates the presence of forms of secular religion in totalitarian regimes, most notably in Bolshevism, and concludes that not utopianism, but the seeking of perfectibility (a deviation of utopianism itself) in combination with messianism and the cult of violence, produces devastating effects.

Fátima Vieira looks at the philosophical aspects of utopianism, concentrating on its ability to provide a place for new ideas rather than plans and projects for making human society perfect. She argues that utopia is not a final destination, but that it offers us a horizon toward which one may move, thus the tension between *utopia*, the no-place, and *eutopia*, the good place, becomes a productive one. Reflecting on the notions of Dias de Carvalho and Gilles Deleuze, Vieira uses the distinctions of the concepts of time, most notably *actuel*, time of becoming—an actuality that grows out of history—and *avenir*, a counter-time of history with a potential of critical negativity, offering a network of possibilities. This in turn implies that the prospective attitude of utopianism, one that explores options, should take prevalence over the traditionally preferred prophetic attitude with its static nature. The prospective attitude also concentrates on the dynamism that utopia offers, especially when utopia is considered as a process or method rather than a finite destination.

The discussion concerning the relations of utopian studies and political science is continued in the chapter written by András Bozóki and

Miklós Sükösd, who elaborate on the specifically Central European varieties of anarchism. The version of anarchism that they recognize stems from the liminal situation of Central European social and political life. Central Europe from the late nineteenth century until today has experienced political structures that follow neither an Eastern European logic of despotism nor a Western democratic pattern, but something in between, where “achieving democracy seemed only a few steps away.” The hybrid anarcho-democratic tradition that Bozóki and Sükösd map resulted in a specifically Central European third way utopianism that would count as an oxymoron in other areas of the world. While Bozóki and Sükösd outline the various Hungarian anarchic traditions in an East-Central European context, the importance of notions concerning small-community democracy are underlined, and another hybrid political notion, liberal socialism, emerges in an antitotalitarian context.

The following chapter leads closer to the realm of imaginary literature. Dmitry Halavach discusses the interrelation of literature and political science in analyzing how George Orwell’s seminal *Nineteen Eighty-Four* influenced a whole generation of Western intellectuals’ (and most of those who lived west of the Iron Curtain) perceptions of totalitarianism and the everyday reality of the Soviet attempt to transform life. (Anthony Burgess, when he visited Leningrad in the 1960s, was surprised to find that Soviet reality was in many aspects non-Orwellian.) Halavach’s chapter reveals that for most of the twentieth century, and particularly during the Cold War, Soviet Studies’ perceptions of Soviet reality was highly influenced by Orwell’s fiction. After the collapse of the Soviet Empire, the discourse changed significantly, yet the literary influences did not fade away, substantiating the claim that the fictional is not isolated from the factual. Halavach’s analysis concentrates on confessional literature, and underpins Gregory Claeys’s thesis about the necessity of having a religious aspect in political utopianism in order to create disastrous results—a case study of Bolshevism for the general rule.

The second part of the volume continues to explore the relationship between the literary and political aspects of utopia, concentrating primarily on literary works and exploring their political and ideological potentials. Eglantina Rempert’s treatment of the complex influence of Marxism on leading Irish intellectuals at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as William Morris and the outstanding modernist playwrights William Butler Yeats and George Bernard Shaw, well exemplifies the approach the volume tries to establish. In a truly interdisciplinary analysis Rempert reveals the dialectics present in the mutual influ-

ences of political ideology and literary and artistic achievement. Carefully disentangling the relationships of these leading figures of art and theater, and the impact of Marxist ideas on them, Rempert reveals a network of influences among Morris's Arts and Crafts Movement, Yeats's discoveries in Irish folk utopias, and his later poetic and theatrical achievements. Although Shaw's socialist convictions and his relationship to the Fabian Society is hardly a novelty, Rempert's close reading of *John Bull's Other Island* offers a delicate and revealing analysis of its utopian nature. Rempert argues that the social criticism of Marxism is met with quasi-religious idealism and spiritualism in the Irish scene, enriching social utopianism with the importance of artistic or aesthetic values.

Issues concerning the relationship of religion and utopianism are further investigated in the chapter written by Károly Pintér on the concept of civil religion, particularly as it appears in H. G. Wells's fictional and speculative works. Pintér discusses the controversial relationship of utopias to organized religion (and the equally controversial attitude of Catholic thinkers, most notably Thomas Molnar, toward utopia) and outlines the history of civil religion as it appeared during the Enlightenment. Pintér argues that a secular approach to religion as a cohesive force of society is a general theme of utopias. Focusing on Wells, Pintér points out that despite his socialist attitudes, he rejected certain Marxist notions, but that religion plays an important role in *A Modern Utopia* and also in *The Open Conspiracy*. In both works Wells argues explicitly or implicitly for the necessity of some form of religion mainly for its moral functions, devoid of transcendental notions and even of private faith.

The next two chapters investigate literary works with a special relevance to the Central European political structures and possibilities in the first half of the twentieth century. Zsolt Czigányik analyzes *Kazohinia*, an outstanding Hungarian utopia written by Sándor Szathmári in the late 1930s, in the context of totalitarian ideas, especially notions of Italian fascism. Czigányik also investigates whether a radically positivist utopia fulfills or discredits the ideals of anarchism. A worldview rejecting all transcendent notions, including any aspect of symbolic expression, results in a peculiarly alarming view of humanity. This is followed by an investigation of the pacifist-utopian aspects of Aldous Huxley's thought, as discovered through a lesser-known pamphlet written by the author of one of the most influential dystopias. Ákos Farkas not only reveals that Huxley looked very critically at the Versailles peace treaties that ended the First World War, but Farkas also discusses this pamphlet's dubious translation into Hungarian, a rendering of the original text that turns it into a harsh pro-revi-

sionist proclamation. Besides pointing out the worst blunders in the translation, Farkas's analysis sheds light on the Central European reception of utopian and dystopian ideas, on how Huxley related to the problems of Central (or as he put it, Middle) Europe, and on whether pacifism and the activities of the Peace Pledge Union were only an emotional, or also an intellectual, endeavor.

The last section of this volume investigates some popular genres of the contemporary scene, discussing post-apocalyptic movies and a highly popular book series that has also been adapted to the screen. Vera Benczik takes a close look at recent movies depicting humanity's end, all the while outlining the post-apocalyptic genre from its earliest beginnings in ancient literature and embedding it into dystopianism. The chapter discusses how New York, and particularly the twin towers of the World Trade Center, disappeared from disaster movies after their real destruction. Benczik powerfully links eschatological visual effects to dystopian notions, shedding light on how graphic descriptions and the display of cataclysmic events represent traumatic events and provide the pleasure of destruction at the same time. Zoltán Gábor Szűcs investigates the most popular pieces of literature after Harry Potter, George R. R. Martin's fantasy book series, *A Song of Ice and Fire*. The chapter focuses on the presence and role of political realism in Martin's fiction. Szűcs manages to give a revealing and indeed masterfully concise (especially if one considers the length of the original texts) analysis of a fantasy book series from a political scientist's point of view. Martin's work is contrasted with the great idol of the genre, J. R. R. Tolkien, to reveal major differences between them and to uncover the interrelations of realism (or the illusions of realism) and anti-utopianism.

As I write these lines, Budapest is recovering from a thunderstorm of epic magnitude. The population of the city had looked forward to the cold front that had appeared in the weather forecasts many days before the storm actually struck; it had promised a welcome change from the heat of the summer that many days reached excruciating levels. The change promised to be benevolent, yet what occurred was disastrous and showed that humanity, despite all its achievements and pretensions, is inferior to the gigantic forces of nature. Hundreds of trees fell, underground passages filled with water, and vehicular transport was blocked all around the city. It was not one of the greatest disasters of the world, but the experience was still traumatic. I can clearly see the faces before me of people trying to clear the roads of the fallen branches and roof tiles. Surprise, helplessness, and shock were written on these faces. The destruction could not be avoided,

and even when something like this was forecast, we did not expect its magnitude. Hungary, a country in Central Europe, is a place historically vulnerable to invading armies and totalitarian regimes, but in terms of the forces of nature, it is a relatively peaceful spot of the world.

The experience of the storm is similar to that brought about by the utopian strivings of political regimes. Both feature the helplessness of the people suffering their ravages, and highlight the thwarted nature of people's expectations. Though perhaps not as completely as in the case of the forces of nature, the individual often feels in the hands of large, uncontrollable powers. Something beneficial is expected and perhaps desired or planned, but something disastrous occurs. This is how utopia turns into dystopia—a process considered inevitable by Karl Popper. So today, even when faced with the threat of ecological disaster predicted to exceed what happened to Hungary in the summer of 2015, and when the future of human civilization is by no means bright, the present volume aims at taking a step further on the road to understanding the complex and controversial nature of utopia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abensour, Miguel. "Persistent Utopia." *Constellations* 15, no. 3 (2008): 406–21.
- Abrams, M. H. *The Mirror and the Lamp*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Baccolini, Raffaella and Tom Moylan. "Dystopia and Histories." In *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, edited by Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan, 1–12. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." In *Image-Music-Text*, translated by S. Heath, 146–51. London: Fontana Press, 1977. Originally published as "La Mort de l'auteur." *Manteia* 5 (1968): 12–17.
- Budakov, Vesselin. "Dystopia: An Earlier Eighteenth-Century Use." *Notes and Queries* 57, no. 1 (2010): 86–88.
- Frye, Northrop. "Varieties of Literary Utopias." In *The Stubborn Structure*, 109–34. London: Methuen, 1980.
- Kumar, Krishan. "Utopia's Shadow." In *Dystopia(n) Matters*, edited by Fátima Vieira, 19–22. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2013.
- Modena, Letizia. *Italo Calvino's Architecture of Lightness*. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Molnar, Thomas. *Utopia: The Perennial Heresy*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967.
- Rancière, Jacques. "The Politics of Literature." *SubStance* 33, no. 1 (2004): 10–24.
- Ronen, Ruth. *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. "Authority & Utopia: Utopianism in Political Thought." *Polity* 14, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 565–84.

- . “The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited.” *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37.
- . *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. New York: Open Media, 2013.
- Urban, George. “The Devil in History: A Conversation with Leszek Kołakowski.” *Encounter* 56, no. 1 (January 1981): 9–26.
- White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form*. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- . “Introduction: Historical Fiction, Fictional History, and Historical Reality.” *Rethinking History* 9, nos. 2–3 (June–September 2005): 147–57.
- . *Metahistory*. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.
- Whitebrook, Maureen. “Politics and Literature?” *Politics* 15, no. 1 (1995): 55–62.
- Wimsatt, W. K. and M. C. Beardsley. “The Intentional Fallacy.” *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3 (July–September 1946): 468–88.

PART ONE

Utopia with a Political Focus

Ideology and Utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur*

LYMAN TOWER SARGENT | PROFESSOR EMERITUS,
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

The two concepts ideology and utopia were first and most famously brought together as the title of Karl Mannheim's 1929 book *Ideologie und Utopie*.¹ Since then only one other thinker, Paul Ricoeur, has discussed the two concepts together while also making original contributions to our understanding of both concepts and their relationship.² For Mannheim ideology and utopia were central to his thinking up to his exile to London in the early 1930s and the publication in 1936 of the English translation of *Ideology and Utopia*. Although they were not as important, he continued to use them after he arrived in London. Scholarship on this aspect of Mannheim's thought focuses on ideology and tends to ignore or dismiss his discussion of utopia. Most of the scholarship on Mannheim stresses his discussion of ideology as his most important contribution, and even

* Originally published in slightly different form as "Ideology and Utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13, no. 3 (October 2008): 263–73. The present essay includes an addendum written in June 2015. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher.

¹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideologie und Utopie* (Bonn: Cohen, 1929).

² Ernst Bloch in *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1955–1959), published in English as *The Principle of Hope*, 3 vols., translated by Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); and Fredric Jameson, "The Dialectic of Utopia and Ideology," in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative As a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press/London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 281–99, have discussed both concepts. While both writers have contributed original insights into the concept utopia, Bloch used Mannheim's definition of ideology and Jameson used Louis Althusser's definition of ideology.

though Shils came to disparage *Ideology and Utopia*,³ he said that it was important in that it brought the study of ideology to the attention of social scientists.⁴

For Ricoeur ideology and utopia were a small part of his work, and although he refers to the concepts at other times, they were a significant focus only in the 1970s and '80s. Scholarship on Ricoeur often ignores this part of his work altogether.⁵

Both Mannheim and Ricoeur wrote more extensively about ideology than utopia and therefore appear to put much more emphasis on it than on utopia, but it is my argument that utopia is ultimately more important for both of them, and that for both of them utopia is at least part of the solution to the problems raised by ideology. But in reaching that conclusion Ricoeur explicitly rejects part of Mannheim's analysis.⁶

Karl Mannheim⁷

When published, *Ideologie und Utopie* was an important event in German sociology attracting thoughtful and generally positive reviews from Hannah Arendt, Herbert Marcuse, and Paul Tillich, among others, and strongly negative reviews from members of the Frankfurt School and negative articles on Mannheim by members of the Frankfurt School continued

³ Edward Shils, "Ideology and Utopia, by Karl Mannheim," *Daedalus* 103, no. 1 (Winter 1974): 86–89.

⁴ Edward Shils, "Mannheim, Karl," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills, vol 9 (New York: Macmillan and the Free Press, 1968), 562.

⁵ Although he lived until 2005 and continued to publish into this century, his work on ideology and utopia came at the peak of his career, which makes its neglect particularly difficult to understand.

⁶ One scholar actually says that Ricoeur uses Mannheim's definitions even though he explicitly rejected them. See Peter Kemp, "Narrative Ethics and Moral Law in Ricoeur," in *Paul Ricoeur and Contemporary Moral Thought*, ed. John Wall, William Schweiker, and W. David Wall (New York: Routledge, 2004), 37.

⁷ After an academic career in philosophy and sociology in Hungary and Germany, where he held the chair in sociology at Frankfurt, Mannheim was invited by Harold Laski to come to the London School of Economics, where he served as lecturer in sociology for ten years before becoming Professor of the Sociology of Education in the Institute of Education of the University of London. His position at the LSE was always precarious because he was on annual contracts paid from private funds and was never a regular appointment. I thank David Kettler for pointing this out to me.

for some years.⁸ It was then translated into English, ostensibly by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils, and published in 1936 with added material and the subtitle *An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*.⁹

Both versions, but particularly the English one, were put together from essays written for various purposes and not revised. As a result there are significant inconsistencies, including in the use of the key words ideology and utopia.¹⁰ But this approach was central to Mannheim's way of working, and in a letter from 1946, he defended the way he presented his results, saying,

If there are contradictions and inconsistencies in my paper this is,
I think, not so much due to that fact that I overlooked them but because

⁸ See David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr, "Rationalizing the Irrational: Karl Mannheim and the Besetting Sin of German Intellectuals," *American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 6 (May 1990): 1454n10, 1468n22 for information on Mannheim's earliest reception in Germany. See Martin Jay, "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge," *Telos*, no. 20 (Summer 1974): 72–89; and James Schmidt, "Critical Theory and the Sociology of Knowledge: A Response to Martin Jay," *Telos*, no. 21 (Fall 1974): 168–80 on his treatment by the Frankfurt School. Many of the responses have been translated and published in Volker Meja and Nico Stehr, eds., *Knowledge and Politics: The Sociology of Knowledge Dispute* (London: Routledge, 1990).

⁹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1936; London: Routledge, 1991). Repr. as *Ideology and Utopia. Collected Works Volume One* (London: Routledge, 1997). The initial translation was by Shils under the nominal oversight of Wirth. Mannheim revised this translation with the assistance of Jean Floud (then McDonald). This process produced an awkward, sometimes stilted, translation with many errors. The best discussion of the process of translation is David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr, *Karl Mannheim* (Chichester, UK: Ellis Horwood, 1984), 111–18. See also David Frisby, "Karl Mannheim: From the Critique of Ideology to the Sociology of Knowledge," in *The Alienated Mind: The Sociology of Knowledge in Germany 1918–1933*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 108; and Bryan S. Turner, "Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*," *Political Studies* 43, no. 4 (December 1995): 720.

¹⁰ One scholar identifies five different uses of ideology and five different uses of utopia within the original German text. See Arnhelm Neusüss, *Utopisches Bewusstsein und freischwebende Intelligenz zur Wissenssoziologie Karl Mannheims*, vol. 10 of *Marburger Abhandlungen zur politischen Wissenschaft* (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1968), 134–36, quoted in Frisby, "Karl Mannheim," 167–68. Also in Karl Mannheim, "Utopia," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. Edwin R. A. Seligman, vol. 15 (New York: Macmillan, 1935), 200–203; the terms are defined somewhat differently than in *Ideology and Utopia*.

I make a point of developing a theme to its end even if it contradicts some other statements. I use this method because I think that in this marginal field of human knowledge we should not conceal inconsistencies, so to speak covering up the wounds, but our duty is to show the sore spots in human thinking at its present stage.¹¹

In the same letter, he wrote, "I want to break through the old epistemology radically but have not yet succeeded fully."¹² Thus, Mannheim saw his project as both a stage in a developing field of analysis and truly radical, but both elements have been neglected in the scholarship on *Ideology and Utopia*.¹³

From the 1920s to the mid-thirties, ideology and utopia were central to Mannheim's thinking, and as early as the mid-twenties Mannheim stressed the importance of utopia, saying that "Utopia contains the direction, the point of view, the perspective, and the set of questions from which the present and the past first become comprehensible at all. Investigating the structure of utopia is therefore one of the most essential tasks of the sociology of thought."¹⁴ And in a lecture given in 1930, Mannheim said, "By utopia I do not mean an unreal portrayal of the future but a giving to the world a meaning which is viewed as a possibility for its future."¹⁵ And in the same lecture, he said "As soon as utopia appears, a substantial transformation occurs, a new type of man comes into being."¹⁶ Finally, in *Ideology and Utopia*, he wrote,

¹¹ Letter of Karl Mannheim to Kurt H. Wolff, 15 April 1946, quoted in Kurt H. Wolff, "The Sociology of Knowledge and Social Theory," *Symposium on Sociological Theory*, ed. Llewellyn Gross (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 572.

¹² *Ibid.*, 571.

¹³ Exceptions can be found in some of the work of David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr. See "Karl Mannheim's Sociological Theory of Culture," *Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 5, no. 4 (Autumn 1980): 405; and "Karl Mannheim and Conservatism: The Ancestry of Historical Thinking," *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 1 (February 1984): 77. See also Susan Hekman, "Re-Interpreting Mannheim," *Theory, Culture and Society* 3, no. 1 (1986): 137–42, which is a response to Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst, "Interpreting Mannheim," *Theory, Culture and Society* 2, no. 1 (1983): 5–15.

¹⁴ Karl Mannheim, *Structures of Thinking*, ed. David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr; trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry Weber Nicholsen (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 246.

¹⁵ Karl Mannheim, *Sociology as Political Education*, ed. David Kettler and Colin Loader (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001), 22.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

whereas the decline of ideology represents a crisis only for certain strata, and the objectivity which comes from the unmasking of ideologies always takes the form of self-clarification for society as a whole, the complete disappearance of the utopian element from human thought and action would mean that human nature and human development would take on a totally new character. The disappearance of utopia brings about a static state of affairs in which man himself becomes no more than a thing. We would be faced then with the greatest paradox imaginable, namely that man, who has achieved the highest degree of rational mastery of existence, left without ideals, becomes a mere creature of impulses. Thus, after a long, tortuous, but heroic development, just at the highest stage of awareness, when history is ceasing to be blind fate, and is becoming more and more man's own creation, with the relinquishment of utopias, man would lose his will to shape history and therewith his ability to understand it.¹⁷

It is hard to think of a stronger case for the importance of utopia than such statements.¹⁸

Kettler, Meja, and Stehr contend that the passage from *Ideology and Utopia* was written in homage to Alfred Weber and that it contradicts Mannheim's understanding of utopia elsewhere.¹⁹ While they may be right that it was an homage, and one hesitates to disagree with anything they say about Mannheim, my argument here is that it accurately reflects Mannheim's understanding of the importance of utopia, and it was understood that way by some of the commentators at the time.²⁰

¹⁷ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 236.

¹⁸ Similar arguments were made by Buckminster Fuller, who titled one of his books *Utopia or Oblivion. The Prospects for Humanity* (New York: Bantam, 1969) and the Dutch sociologist F. L. Polak, who wrote, "If Western man now stops thinking and dreaming the materials of new images of the future [utopias] and attempts to shut himself up in the present, out of longing for security and for fear of the future, his civilization will come to an end. He has no choice but to dream or to die, condemning the whole of Western society to die with him." F. L. Polak, *The Image of the Future: Enlightening the Past, Orientating the Present, Forecasting the Future*, trans. Elise Boulding, 2 vols. (Leiden: A. W. Sythoff, 1961), 1: 53.

¹⁹ Kettler, Meja, and Stehr, "Karl Mannheim and Conservatism," 74–75.

²⁰ See, for example, Paul Tillich, "On Ideology and Utopia," trans. Steven P. Bucher and Denise Siemssen, in *Knowledge and Politics: The Sociology of Knowledge Dispute*, ed. Volker Meja and Nico Stehr (London: Routledge, 1990), 107–12. Originally published as "Ideologie und Utopie," *Die Gesellschaft* 6, no. 2 (1929): 348–55.

In *Ideology and Utopia*, initially ideology takes two forms, the particular and the total. The particular refers to ideology “as more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation” and is not central to Mannheim’s argument.²¹ The total refers “to the ideology of an age or a concrete historico-social group, e.g. of a class, when we are concerned with the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this epoch or of this group.”²² And ideologies are everywhere: “There is no sphere of life . . . which is not smothered in ideologies,”²³ and while he discusses class most extensively, Mannheim refers at times to generations, women,²⁴ masculinity and femininity, status, and money, and he recognises that people are members of and identify with multiple groups.

For Mannheim in all cases ideology is concerned with something hidden, and he often speaks of the need to unmask ideologies. For example, in his 1924 article “Historicism,” which is generally considered to be a precursor to the argument in *Ideology and Utopia*, he discusses the “unmasking” of an ideology, comparing it to the “unmasking” of a lie. He writes, “In unmasking ideologies, we seek to bring to light an unconscious process, not in order to annihilate the moral existence of persons making certain statements, but in order to destroy the social efficacy of certain ideas by unmasking the function they serve.”²⁵ How to achieve this is the

²¹ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 49.

²² *Ibid.*, 49–50.

²³ Mannheim, *Structures of Thinking*, 356. Mannheim refers to Paul Schilder, “The Analysis of Ideologies as a Psycho-therapeutic Method, Especially in Group Treatment,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 93, no. 3 (November 1936): 601–17 in support of this statement.

²⁴ Mannheim is known to have been a supporter of and advocate for women in German academia during his time there. Turner notes that he had written on the sociology of women at a time when such work was extremely rare (See Bryan S. Turner, “Preface to the New Edition,” *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, new ed. trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (London: Routledge, 1991), xxxvi), and Mannheim encouraged Viola Klein to publish *The Feminine Character: History of an Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1946; subsequent editions 1971 and 1989) in the series he edited for Routledge and Kegan Paul. In his “Foreword” to that book, he discussed the way that ideology had been used to oppress women, a point he makes less directly in a number of his other works. See David Kettler and Volker Meja, *Karl Mannheim and the Crisis of Liberalism: The Secret of These New Times* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1995), 294–316 on Klein.

²⁵ Karl Mannheim, “The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge,” in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), 141. Originally published in German in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* 53, no. 3 (April 1925): 557–652.

problem, and Mannheim comes close to real incoherence in trying to stay out of the trap of relativism while avoiding the trap of simplistic objectivity.

One of the problems for Mannheim was how to stand sufficiently outside one's conditioning to recognize ideologies and utopias for what they were rather than accepting them as accurate descriptions of the world. He argued that what he called the "free-floating" or "unattached" or "relatively classless stratum" of the intelligentsia would, because they had escaped their social origins²⁶, be capable of such recognition. Education, though essential, is not enough by itself. For Mannheim, it is "vertical" social mobility, or more generally social movement that breaks group ties that makes such awareness possible.²⁷

Mannheim is searching for what he calls the "reality" behind the ideologies and utopias. As he says, "The attempt to escape ideological and utopian distortions is, in the last analysis, a quest for reality." Both ideology and utopia "contain the imperative that every idea must be tested by its congruence with reality,"²⁸ but Mannheim knows that reality is itself unstable, "in constant flux"²⁹ as he puts it.

For Mannheim the perception of what is an ideology or a utopia will depend entirely on where we stand, "to determine concretely, however, what in a given case is ideological and what utopian is extremely difficult."³⁰ We can only tell by looking at the past, because "Ideas which turned out to have been only distorted representations of a past or potential social order were ideological, while those which were adequately realized in the succeeding social order were relative utopias."³¹

He says that utopia is equated with the unrealizable because from the point of view of those in power it cannot be realized. As he puts it, "The representatives of a given order will label as utopian all concep-

²⁶ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 137–46. See Mannheim, "The Problem of the Intelligentsia: An Inquiry Into Its Past and Present Role" in *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, ed. Ernest Mannheim and Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 91–170, for a discussion on the roles of the intelligentsia. See also Kettler, Meja, and Stehr, "Karl Mannheim and Conservatism," 78–79; and Kettler, Meja, and Stehr, "Rationalizing the Irrational," 1458–59.

²⁷ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 6.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 176. Ricoeur says much the same thing; see Paul Ricoeur, "Ideology and Utopia," trans. Kathleen Blamey, in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 323. Originally published as *Du texte à l'action: Essais d'hermeneutique, II* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1986).

³¹ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 184.

tions of existence which *from their point of view* can in principle never to realized. According to this usage, the contemporary connotation of the term 'utopian' is predominantly that of an idea which is in principle unrealizable."³² And this meaning of utopian remains common; to call something "utopian" is often a means of dismissing it without further consideration.

For Mannheim, ideology always reflects the desire of identifiable groups to block change to protect their own status and utopia reflects the desire of identifiable groups to bring about change to enhance their status. "Because the concrete determination of what is utopian proceeds always from a certain stage of existence, it is possible that the utopias of to-day may become the realities of to-morrow."³³ And once that happens, the former utopia can become an ideology.

After arriving in England and publishing *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim published two books, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction* (1940), which had originally been published in German but very substantially revised in England, and *Diagnosis of Our Time* (1943).³⁴ Both works discuss ideology and utopia, although to a limited degree. In both books Mannheim is concerned with how to get rid of them, although his concern focuses more on ideology than utopia. He does, though, again stress that ideologies are not just concerned with politics and mentions masculinity and femininity, status, and money, and says, "as most of these ideologies are not invented by the individual but are instilled into him by the community, and as they are usually deeply rooted in the unconscious, it is very difficult to remove them."³⁵ And in a footnote, he adds "ideologies and utopias have their roots in group interests and needs which are closely related to the pressure under which these groups live. The removal of these ideologies or utopias is thus not only a matter of psychological analysis but a question of changing the social and economic position."³⁶

³² Ibid., 176–77. Emphasis in original.

³³ Ibid., 183.

³⁴ For information on Mannheim's reception in England and the U.S., see David Kettler and Volker Meja, "'That typically German kind of sociology which verges towards philosophy': The Dispute about *Ideology and Utopia* in the United States," *Sociological Theory* 12, no. 3 (November 1994): 279–81.

³⁵ Karl Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime Essays of a Sociologist* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1943), 90.

³⁶ Ibid., 171n15.

The implications of that last phrase makes it possible to say that his positive as well as his negative valuation of utopia remains. And in *Man and Society*, albeit again in a footnote, he insists that it is necessary to keep the positive sense of utopia alive,

that other form of utopia which has the courage to regard that which does not exist or which hardly exists in our society as possible in a society which has a different type of organization. Every attempt at planning is utopian in the latter positive sense: it seeks to direct given facts—including psychological ones—in such a way that new facts will come into being in place of those now existing.³⁷

Thus, for Mannheim, while both ideologies and utopias pose problems, utopias must be kept alive because they include the seeds of needed social change.

Paul Ricoeur³⁸

Ricoeur is best known as a Christian philosopher and not as a political theorist. He published his first essay on ideology in 1973, the lectures were delivered in 1975, and his first essay treating both concepts was published in 1976. He continued to publish essays on one or both of the concepts until the publication of his *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* in 1986, at

³⁷ Karl Mannheim, *Man and Society In an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure. With a Bibliographical Guide to the Study of Modern Society*, rev. ed., trans. Edward Shils (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1940), 200n1. Based on *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter des Umbau* (Leiden, 1935).

³⁸ Ricoeur made his career within French academia, first at Strasbourg, then from 1956 to 1967 at the Sorbonne. In 1967 he moved to Nanterre, which in 1968 became the intellectual center of the student rebellion. Ricoeur's opposition to the students, rarely mentioned by commentators, must have made his first years at Nanterre extremely difficult, and may have led to his interest in ideology and utopia. Also in 1967 he succeeded Paul Tillich as the John Nuveen Professor of Philosophical Theology at the University of Chicago, which led to his series of lectures on ideology and utopia. He stayed at Nanterre until his retirement in 1980 and at Chicago until 1992. Ricoeur's *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* was published in 1986 based on recordings of lectures given in English in 1975 together with Ricoeur's brief notes for those lectures. While Ricoeur assisted with the text, he was no longer working on the subject in any significant way in 1986.

which point, while he continues to refer to them from time to time, they play a much-reduced role in his work.

Ricoeur's approach in the *Lectures* is to discuss theorists or exponents of ideology and utopia in turn. On ideology he devotes, in order, five chapters to Marx, three to Althusser, one to Mannheim, two each to Weber and Jürgen Habermas, and one to Geertz. On utopia he devotes one chapter each to Mannheim, Henri Saint-Simon, and Charles Fourier, which is an odd selection in that neither Fourier nor Saint-Simon were theorists of utopia but exponents of particular visions that have been called utopian.³⁹

In a formulation he repeats in all his discussions of the concepts, Ricoeur argues that both ideology and utopia have one negative and two positive characteristics, and he presents them in parallel. Ideology's negative form is distortion and utopia's is fantasy, and each is commonly found in the literature on the concepts. Distortion, or a variation thereof, was virtually the sole characterization of ideology from Marx to Mannheim, and it still dominates much thinking about ideology. And in an early essay, Ricoeur stressed the negative side of ideology, writing, "The Christian will therefore be an idol smasher, an iconoclast, a profaner of ideologies."⁴⁰

Fantasy as the negative aspect of utopia is somewhat less straightforward, and sometimes Ricoeur uses "escapism" instead, which is probably the best word for what he has in mind, although his equation of escapism with "nostalgia" adds another complication.⁴¹ Harvey Cox writes that fantasy or escapism "can be dangerous if it tempts people away from dealing with the real issues,"⁴² and Ricoeur says "that the utopias that are dangerous are those not grounded in reality."⁴³ But Cox also writes,

³⁹ On Fourier, see Jonathan Beecher, *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). On Saint-Simon, see Frank E. Manuel, *The New World of Henri Saint-Simon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956).

⁴⁰ Paul Ricoeur, "Ye Are the Salt of the Earth," Ricoeur, *Political and Social Essays*, ed. David Stewart and Joseph Bien (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), 119. Originally published in the *Ecumenical Review* 10, no. 3 (1958): 265.

⁴¹ Ricoeur, "Ideology and Utopia," 321–22.

⁴² Harvey Cox, "Fantasy and Utopia: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy," in *The Feast of Fools* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 83.

⁴³ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 3:215. Originally published as *Temps et Récit*, vol. 3 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1985).

“When fantasy is neither tamed by ideological leashes nor rendered irrelevant by idiosyncrasy, it can inspire new civilizations and bring empires to their knees. How? It does so through that particular form of fantasy we might call ‘utopian thought,’ social vision, or perhaps simply ‘political fantasy.’”⁴⁴ And nostalgia, which is always for something that never existed, can be escapism, but it can also be a longing for a better way of life that was imagined to have existed in the past. After all, the entire tradition of the golden age places the better life firmly in the past.

The two positive aspects of ideology are “legitimation” and “integration or identity”; the parallel positive aspects of utopia are “an alternate form of power” and “exploration of the possible.”⁴⁵ From the point of view of believers, legitimation is probably the most fundamental purpose of ideology—an ideology speaks for a group. Citing Jacques Ellul as his source, Ricoeur argues that ideology is the way the memory of a founding event or revolution is domesticated and internalized.⁴⁶

In this sense an ideology tells a story, one that justifies the existence and beliefs of the group. At the same time, it fulfills the second positive role of ideology in giving an identity to the group and an accepted identity is central to pulling together or integrating the group. But, of course, remembering the negative side of ideology, the stories are false or at least falsifications of what actually happened.⁴⁷ And, as with Mannheim, it is important to “unmask” the falsification/distortion.⁴⁸ But it is also important to remember that for the group, the ideology does not falsify—for the believer the stories are true.

Every society possesses . . . a socio-political *imaginaire*—that is, an ensemble of symbolic discourses that can function as a rupture or a reaffirmation. As reaffirmation, the *imaginaire* operates as an “ideology” which

⁴⁴ Cox, “Fantasy and Utopia,” 82.

⁴⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 310.

⁴⁶ Ricoeur cites Jacques Ellul, “La rôle médiateur de l’Idéologie,” in *Démythisation et Idéologie. Actes du colloque organisé par le Centre international d’études humanistes et par L’Institut d’études philosophiques de Rome. Rome, 4–9 Janvier 1973*, ed. Enrico Castelli (Paris: Aubier Éditions Montaigne, 1973), 335–54, but does not give a page reference.

⁴⁷ He repeats this in Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 82. Originally published as *Mémoire, l’histoire, l’oubli* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2000).

⁴⁸ Ricoeur, “Ideology and Utopia,” 320–21.

can positively repeat and represent the founding discourse of a society, what I call its “foundational symbols,” thus preserving its sense of identity. After all, cultures create themselves by telling stories of their past. The danger is, of course, that this reaffirmation can be perverted, usually by monopolistic elites, into a mystificatory discourse which serves to uncritically vindicate or justify the established political powers. In such instances, the symbols of a community become fixed and fetishized; they serve as lies. Over against this, there exists the *imaginaire* of rupture, a discourse of “utopia” which remains critical of the powers that be out of fidelity to an ‘elsewhere,’ to a society that is not-yet.⁴⁹

And in the same passage he notes both the negative side of utopia and the way ideology and utopia relate to each other, saying, “For besides the authentic utopia of critical rupture there can also exist a dangerously schizophrenic utopian discourse which projects a static future cut off from the present and the past, a mere alibi for the consolidation of the repressive powers that be. . . . In short, ideology as a symbolic confirmation of the past, and utopia as a symbolic opening towards the future, are complementary; if cut off from each other, they can lead to forms of political pathology.”⁵⁰

The central problem for Ricoeur, as it was for Mannheim, is the pervasive influence of ideology and how it can be recognized from within. As Ricoeur puts it, “We think from its point of view rather than thinking about it.”⁵¹ Although Ricoeur also suggests a way out of the dilemma, he criticizes Mannheim for thinking that it is possible to escape from this pervasive influence.

As noted above, Mannheim suggested “free floating intellectuals” as the cure to ideology. While Ricoeur specifically rejects Mannheim’s suggestion, in 1965 he published an essay on “The Tasks of the Political Edu-

⁴⁹ Paul Ricoeur, “The Creativity of Language,” in Richard Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers: The Phenomenological Heritage* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1984), 29.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵¹ Paul Ricoeur, “Ideology and Ideology Critique,” in *Phenomenology and Marxism*, ed. Bernhard Waldenfels, Jan M. Broekman, and Ante Pažanin, trans. J. Claude Evans (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 137; and “Can There Be a Scientific Concept of Ideology?,” *Phenomenology and the Social Sciences*, ed. Joseph Bien (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978), 47. Originally published in *Phenomenological Society Newsletter* 3, no. 2 (1974–1975): 2–5; nos. 3–4 (1974–1975): 4–6.

cator” that makes a somewhat similar argument.⁵² But for Ricoeur truth is subversive, and so is utopia; for him, one of the functions of utopia is to undermine ideology: “From ‘nowhere’ springs the most formidable question of what is. Utopia therefore appears in its primitive core as the exact counterpoint of our first concept of ideology as the function of social integration. Utopia, in counterpoint, is the function of social subversion.”⁵³

Utopia makes it possible to criticize ideology without having to step outside its influence. He writes, “This is my conviction: the only way to get out of the circularity in which ideologies engulf us is to assume a utopia, declare it, and judge an ideology on this basis. Because the absolute onlooker [Mannheim’s “free-floating intellectual”] is impossible, then it is someone within the process itself who takes the responsibility for judgment.”⁵⁴

Ricoeur argues that from the no place of utopia it is our reality that looks strange.⁵⁵ And he says,

This development of new, alternative perspectives defines utopia’s most basic function. May we not say then that imagination itself—through its utopian function—has a *constitutive* role in helping us *unthink* the nature of our social life? Is not utopia—this leap outside—the way in which we radically rethink what is family, what is consumption, what is authority, what is religion, and so on? Does not the fantasy of an alternative society and its exteriorization “nowhere” work as one of the most formidable contestations of what is?⁵⁶

Utopia’s ability to unmask ideology by stating that there are alternatives is clearly one of its positive aspects. As he puts it, “Usually we are tempted

⁵² Paul Ricoeur, “The Tasks of the Political Educator,” trans. David Stewart, in *Political and Social Essays*, ed. David Stewart and Joseph Bien (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), 284–93. Originally published as “Taches de l’éducateur politique,” *Esprit* 33 (1965): 78–93.

⁵³ Paul Ricoeur, “Imagination in Discourse and Action,” in *The Human Being in Action: The Irreducible Element in Man. Part II. Investigations at the Intersection of Philosophy and Psychiatry*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, vol. 7 of *Analecta Husserliana: The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research* (Dordrecht, NL: D. Reidel, 1978), 19.

⁵⁴ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 172–73.

⁵⁵ Ricoeur, “Ideology and Utopia,” 320; Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 299.

⁵⁶ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 16. Emphasis in original.

to say that we cannot live in a way different from the way we presently do. The utopia, though, introduces a sense of doubt that shatters the obvious.”⁵⁷

The other positive aspect of utopia is as alternative power, and Ricoeur had been concerned with power from early in his career, writing in 1960, “It is through the employment of power that history is made. . . . Power is the fundamental structure of the political order.”⁵⁸ The role of ideology is to support the current distribution of power; the role of utopia is to subvert that distribution. As he put it in the *Lectures*,

my basic hypothesis that what is at stake in ideology and in utopia is power. If, according to my analysis, ideology is the surplus-value added to the lack of belief in authority, utopia is what unmasks this surplus value. All utopias finally come to grips with the problem of authority. They try to show ways people may be governed other than by the state, because each state is the heir to some other state.⁵⁹

The notion that utopias are concerned with non-state rule may reflect his use of Fourier and Saint-Simon, who did take this position, but many, perhaps even most, utopias are concerned with alternative forms of state rule rather than non-state power. Ricoeur is correct in stressing that utopias are concerned with alternative forms of power, but he is wrong in the specific statement he makes.

Still, fundamentally Ricoeur is concerned with the specific forms utopias take; he is interested in the challenge they pose to ideology. And in this the simple fact that utopias stress an alternative to the current power structure is what is important about them.

But Ricoeur sees a potentially fundamental weakness in utopia in that “it seems to represent a kind of social dream without concern for the real steps necessary for movement in the direction of a new society.”⁶⁰ It is dif-

⁵⁷ Ibid., 299–300.

⁵⁸ Paul Ricoeur, “Image of God and the Epic of Man,” in *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1965), 116. Originally published as “L’Image de Dieu et l’épopée humaine,” *Christianisme social* (1960): 493–514. See David Stewart, “The Christian and Politics: Reflections on Power in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur,” *Journal of Religion* 52, no. 1 (January 1972): 56–83.

⁵⁹ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 298.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 1.

difficult to be sure how important this is for Ricoeur, because he also says, "The decisive trait of utopia is then not realizability but the preservation of *opposition*."⁶¹

Although Ricoeur spends much more time discussing ideology than he does utopia, it seems that utopia is, finally, more important than ideology. But obviously there is a dialectical relationship between the two. Clearly to a degree how we view these concepts depends on where we start from, and they are sometimes hard to tell apart. There is a utopia at the heart of every ideology, and belief can turn a utopia into an ideology.

Mannheim and Ricoeur were concerned with the dangers of both ideology and utopia. Having been twice forced into exile by the effects of what he saw as ideologies, Mannheim is particularly concerned with ideology and stresses both the need to root them out and the difficulty of doing so. Ricoeur, on the other hand, always maintained that ideologies had positive functions.

Mannheim certainly implies that human beings cannot live without utopia, but might be better off without ideologies. Ricoeur makes clear that while both are essential, utopia is more important, saying, "my argument was that we must preserve and do justice to the polemical element of ideology, something which can be accomplished principally by relating ideology to utopia. It is always from the point of view of a nascent utopia that we may speak of a dying ideology. It is the conflict and intersection of ideology and utopia that makes sense of each."⁶²

But both seem closest to what John Rawls refers to as a "realistic utopia", saying, "By showing how the social world may realize the features of a realistic utopia, political philosophy provides a long-term goal of political endeavour, and in working toward it gives meaning to what we can do today."⁶³ Or, as Bryan Turner put it,

as Mannheim became increasingly committed to the idea of rational planning within a democratic polity as the most desirable pathway to social change, the vision of Utopia as a historical force was replaced by his commitment to modern education as method of preparation for citizenship. A modern educational system could institutionalize and ratio-

⁶¹ Ibid., 180. Emphasis in original.

⁶² Ibid., 181.

⁶³ John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 128.

nalize the Utopian impulse and contribute to the transformation of eschatology into instrumental rationality.⁶⁴

Or, as Ricoeur put it, "The utopian imagination must [always] be converted into specific expectations."⁶⁵

Thus, the way the relationship between ideology and utopia in these two thinkers has usually been presented appears to have been incorrectly balanced. Utopia is clearly of at least equal importance to ideology and, as I have argued here, probably more important. But as both Mannheim and Ricoeur say, they can be hard to tell apart, and both are potentially troublesome.

The Problem of Ideology in Utopian Literature

Both Mannheim and Ricoeur claim explicitly that their analyses have nothing to do with utopian literature. While we should take what they say seriously and not simply adopt their definitions when discussing utopian literature, ideology has influenced much, perhaps even most, utopian literature to the point that we cannot simply dismiss the connection. At the same time, we cannot simply equate utopia with ideology. They are different concepts, and it is important to keep in mind the distinctions that Mannheim, Ricoeur, and others have made.

Some nineteenth-century studies of utopian literature equated utopias with socialism or communism. Reading such studies so irritated me that I wrote an essay on "Capitalist Eutopias" to make the point that the content of utopian literature was not simply about variations of socialism.⁶⁶

There is some justification for the nineteenth-century equation of utopia and socialism because most of the utopias published during the century were either socialist or labeled as such by opponents, and some of the labeling stuck. Frequently the inaccurate labeling of something by an opponent is motivated by that opponent's ideology. And that led some quite obvious socialists like Edward Bellamy, the author of the best-selling *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* to avoid the word. In 1888 Bellamy, who used nationalism rather than socialism, wrote to William Dean Howells

⁶⁴ Turner, "Preface to the New Edition," li.

⁶⁵ Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 258.

⁶⁶ Lyman Tower Sargent, "Capitalist Eutopias in America," in *America as Utopia*, ed. Kenneth M. Roemer (New York: Burt Franklin & Co., 1981), 192–205.

that "in the radicalness of the opinions I have expressed I may seem to out-socialize the socialists, yet the word socialist is one I never could well stomach."⁶⁷ But of course Bellamy himself was condemned as a socialist, and a number of authors wrote utopias directed against *Looking Backward* that depicted the failure of Bellamy's utopia because it did not conform to these other authors' ideologies. (I have called works like this anti-utopias because they were written against another utopia.)⁶⁸

In the early 1990s two articles were published pointing to the existence of right-wing utopias.⁶⁹ In Germany, scholars had been documenting National Socialist utopias,⁷⁰ and in 2000, when Gregory Claeys and I worked with the exhibit *Utopie: La quête de la société idéale en Occident/ Utopia: The Quest for the Ideal Society in the West* at the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the New York Public Library, the exhibit was criticized more for including National Socialist utopias than for anything else.⁷¹

In the twentieth century, the growth of the dystopia was explicitly ideological in that utopias were written from one ideological perspective against another ideological perspective. For example, the single most common utopia published in the United States in the last decade has been a survivalist dystopia written (and mostly self-published or produced through print on demand) from the perspective of the far right against the perceived communist, feminist, Islamist, liberal, or socialist enemy, often with no distinction made among the five enemies. The enemy, sometimes

⁶⁷ Joseph Schiffman, "Mutual Indebtedness: Unpublished Letters of Edward Bellamy to William Dean Howells," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 12, no. 3 (Autumn 1958): 370.

⁶⁸ Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 9.

⁶⁹ Michael Orth, "Reefs on the Right: Fascist Politics in Contemporary American Libertarian Utopias," *Extrapolation* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 293–316; Peter Fitting, "Utopias Beyond Our Ideals: The Dilemma of the Right-Wing Utopia," *Utopian Studies* 2, nos. 1–2 (1991): 95–109.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Jost Hermand, *Der alte Traum vom neuen Reich: Volkische Utopien und Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988). Translated by Paul Levesque in collab. with Stefan Soldovieri as *Old Dreams of a New Reich: Volkish Utopias and National Socialism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992).

⁷¹ For the exhibition catalogs, see Lyman Tower Sargent, Gregory Claeys, and Roland Schaer, eds. *Utopie: La quête de la société idéale en Occident* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France/Fayard, 2000); and *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World* (New York: The New York Public Library/Oxford University Press, 2000).

after as many as ten volumes, is defeated by those who have prepared in advance by learning survivalist skills and stockpiling weapons. At the end, a utopia emerges based on free enterprise and women knowing their place.

The influence of ideologies on utopias can perhaps be best seen by illustrating how widespread it is. In the latest edition of my book *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, I discuss the following as political ideologies: nationalism, globalization (as a possibly emerging ideology), democracy, feminism, Marxism, anarchism and libertarianism, fascism and National Socialism, Islamic political ideologies, liberation theologies, and environmentalism.⁷² While one can agree or disagree over whether they are all correctly treated as political ideologies, they have all produced utopias, and in most, if not all, cases a variety of utopias reflecting differing understandings of the ideology involved. Michael Freeden, the primary theorist of political ideologies today, argues that while each ideology has a core, it is surrounded by a penumbra of variations, which at least partially explains the variety of utopias that call themselves socialist or democratic but differ on many things.⁷³

My point is quite simple. The relationship between the concepts of utopia and ideology is very complex, and there are such fundamental disagreements over the nature of both that they can be classed as “essentially contested concepts.”⁷⁴ As a result, as scholars trying to understand the relationship regarding specific texts, we have to be careful to make clear how we are using the concepts and then do so consistently.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abercrombie, Nicholas and Brian Longhurst. “Interpreting Mannheim.” *Theory, Culture and Society* 2, no. 1 (1983): 5–15

⁷² See Lyman Tower Sargent, *Contemporary Political Ideologies: A Comparative Analysis*. 14th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2009).

⁷³ Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 75–91; and briefly in his *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 37–38.

⁷⁴ See W. B. Gallie, “Essentially Contested Concepts,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s., 56 (1955–56): 167–98. Applied to ideology, see Michael Freeden, “Editorial. Essential Contestability and Effective Contestability,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9, no. 1 (February 2004): 3–11, with minor corrections in vol. 9, no. 2 (June 2004): 225.

- Beecher, Jonathan. *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Cox, Harvey. "Fantasy and Utopia: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy." In *The Feast of Fools*, 82–97. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Elull, Jacques. "La rôle médiateur de l'idéologie," in *Démythisation et Idéologie. Actes du colloque organise par le Centre international d'études humanistes et par L'Institut d'études philosophiques de Rome. Rome, 4–9 Janvier 1973*, edited by Enrico Castelli, 335–54. Paris: Aubier Éditions Montaigne, 1973.
- Fitting, Peter. "Utopias Beyond Our Ideals: The Dilemma of the Right-Wing Utopia." *Utopian Studies* 2, nos. 1–2 (1991): 95–109.
- Freeden, Michael. "Editorial. Essential Contestability and Effective Contestability." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9, no. 1 (February 2004): 3–11. With minor corrections in vol. 9, no. 2 (June 2004): 225.
- . *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- . *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Frisby, David. "Karl Mannheim: From the Critique of Ideology to the Sociology of Knowledge." In *The Alienated Mind: The Sociology of Knowledge in Germany 1918–1933*, 107–42. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Fuller, Buckminster. *Utopia or Oblivion: The Prospects for Humanity*. New York: Bantam, 1969.
- Gallie, W. B. "Essentially Contested Concepts." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s., 56 (1955–1956): 167–98.
- Hekman, Susan. "Re-Interpreting Mannheim." *Theory, Culture and Society* 3, no. 1 (1986): 137–42.
- Hermand, Jost. *Der alte Traum vom neuen Reich: Volkische Utopien und Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988. Translated by Paul Levesque in collaboration with Stefan Soldovieri as *Old Dreams of a New Reich: Volkish Utopias and National Socialism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992.
- Jay, Martin. "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge." *Telos*, no. 20 (Summer 1974): 72–89.
- Kemp, Peter. "Narrative Ethics and Moral Law in Ricoeur." In *Paul Ricoeur and Contemporary Moral Thought*, edited by John Wall, William Schweiker, and W. David Wall, 32–46. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Kettler, David and Volker Meja. *Karl Mannheim and the Crisis of Liberalism: The Secret of These New Times*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1995.
- . "'That typically German kind of sociology which verges towards philosophy': The Dispute about *Ideology and Utopia* in the United States." *Sociological Theory* 12, no. 3 (November 1994): 279–303.
- Kettler, David, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr. *Karl Mannheim*. Chichester, UK: Ellis Horwood, 1984.
- . "Karl Mannheim and Conservatism: The Ancestry of Historical Thinking." *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 1 (February 1984): 71–85.
- . "Karl Mannheim's Sociological Theory of Culture." *Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 5, no. 4 (Autumn 1980): 405–32.
- . "Rationalizing the Irrational: Karl Mannheim and the Besetting Sin of German Intellectuals." *American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 6 (May 1990): 1441–73.

- Klein, Viola. *The Feminine Character: History of an Ideology*. London: Routledge, 1946. Subsequent editions published in 1971 and 1989.
- Mannheim, Karl. *Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime Essays of a Sociologist*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1943.
- . *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*. Translated by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1936; London: Routledge, 1991. Reprinted as *Ideology and Utopia: Collected Works Volume One*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- . *Ideologie und Utopie*. Bonn: Cohen, 1929.
- . *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure. With a Bibliographical Guide to the Study of Modern Society*. Revised edition. Translated by Edward Shils. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1940. Based on *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter des Umbau*. Leiden, 1935.
- . "The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge" In *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, edited by Paul Kecskemeti, 134–90. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952. Originally published in German in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* 53, no. 3 (April 1925): 557–652.
- . "The Problem of the Intelligentsia: An Inquiry Into Its Past and Present Role." In *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, edited by Ernest Manheim and Paul Kecskemeti, 91–170. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956.
- . *Sociology as Political Education*. Edited by David Kettler and Colin Loader. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001.
- . *Structures of Thinking*. Edited by David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr. Translation by Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry Weber NicholSEN. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
- . "Utopia." In *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 15, edited by Edwin R. A. Seligman, 200–203. New York: Macmillan, 1935.
- Manuel, Frank E. *The New World of Henri Saint-Simon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956.
- Meja, Volker and Nico Stehr, eds. *Knowledge and Politics: The Sociology of Knowledge Dispute*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Neusüss, Arnhelm. *Utopisches Bewusstsein und freischwebende Intelligenz zur Wissenssoziologie Karl Mannheim*. Vol. 10 of *Marburger Abhandlungen zur politischen Wissenschaft*. Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1968.
- Orth, Michael. "Reefs on the Right: Fascist Politics in Contemporary American Libertarian Utopias." *Extrapolation* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 293–316.
- Polak, F. L. *The Image of the Future: Enlightening the Past, Orientating the Present, Forecasting the Future*. Translated by Elise Boulding. 2 vols. Leiden: A. W. Sythoff, 1961.
- Rawls, John. *The Law of Peoples*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Ricoeur, Paul. "Can There Be a Scientific Concept of Ideology?" In *Phenomenology and the Social Sciences*, edited by Joseph Bien, 44–52. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978. Originally published in *Phenomenological Society Newsletter* 3, no. 2 (1974–1975): 2–5; nos. 3–4 (1974–1975): 4–6.
- . "The Creativity of Language." In *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers: The Phenomenological Heritage*, edited by Richard Kearney, 17–36. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.

-
- . "Ideology and Ideology Critique." Translated by J. Claude Evans. In *Phenomenology and Marxism*, edited by Bernhard Waldenfels, Jan M. Broekman, and Ante Pažanin, 134–64. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.
- . "Ideology and Utopia." Translated by Kathleen Blamey. In *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, 308–24. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991. Originally published as *Du texte à l'action: Essais d'hermeneutique, II*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1986.
- . "Image of God and the Epic of Man." In *History and Truth*, translated by Charles A. Kelbley, 110–28. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1965. Originally published as "L'Image de Dieu et l'épopée humaine." *Christianisme social* (1960): 493–514.
- . "Imagination in Discourse and Action." In *The Human Being in Action: The Irreducible Element in Man. Part II. Investigations at the Intersection of Philosophy and Psychiatry*. Edited by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. Vol. 7 of *Analecta Husserliana: The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research*. Dordrecht, NL: D. Reidel, 1978.
- . *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*. Edited by George H. Taylor. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- . *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2004. Originally published as *Mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2000.
- . "The Tasks of the Political Educator." Translated by David Stewart. In *Political and Social Essays*, edited by David Stewart and Joseph Bien, 284–93. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974. Originally published as "Taches de l'éducateur politique." *Esprit* 33 (1965): 78–93.
- . *Time and Narrative*. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1988. Originally published as *Temps et Récit*, vol. 3. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1985.
- . "Ye Are the Salt of the Earth." In *Political and Social Essays*, edited by David Stewart and Joseph Bien, 105–24. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974. Originally published in the *Ecumenical Review* 10, no. 3 (1958): 264–76.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. "Capitalist Eutopias in America." In *America as Utopia*, edited by Kenneth M. Roemer, 192–205. New York: Burt Franklin & Co., 1981.
- . *Contemporary Political Ideologies: A Comparative Analysis*. 14th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2009.
- . "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited." *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37. Translated by Lars Schmeink as "Wiedersehen mit den drei Gesichtern des Utopismus." *Zeitschrift für Fantastikforschung* 2, no. 1 (2012): 98–144.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower, Gregory Claeys, and Roland Schaer, eds. *Utopie: La quête de la société idéale en Occident*. Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France/Fayard, 2000.
- Schaer, Roland, Gregory Claeys, Lyman Tower Sargent, eds. *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*. New York: The New York Public Library/Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Schiffman, Joseph. "Mutual Indebtedness: Unpublished Letters of Edward Bellamy to William Dean Howells." *Harvard Library Bulletin* 12, no. 3 (Autumn 1958): 363–74.

- Schilder, Paul. "The Analysis of Ideologies as a Psycho-therapeutic Method, Especially in Group Treatment." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 93, no. 3 (November 1936): 601–17
- Schmidt, James. "Critical Theory and the Sociology of Knowledge: A Response to Martin Jay." *Telos*, no. 21 (Fall 1974): 168–80
- Stewart, David. "The Christian and Politics: Reflections on Power in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur." *Journal of Religion* 52, no. 1 (January 1972): 56–83
- Tillich, Paul. "On Ideology and Utopia." In *Knowledge and Politics: The Sociology of Knowledge Dispute*, edited by Volker Meja and Nico Stehr and translated by Steven P. Bucher and Denise Siemssen, 107–12. London: Routledge, 1990. Originally published as "Ideologie und Utopie." *Die Gesellschaft* 6, no. 2 (1929): 348–55.
- Turner, Bryan S. "Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*." *Political Studies* 43, no. 4 (December 1995): 718–27.
- . "Preface to the New Edition." In *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* by Karl Mannheim, xxxiii–lviii. Edited and translated by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Wolff, Kurt H. "The Sociology of Knowledge and Social Theory." In *Symposium on Sociological Theory*, edited by Llewellyn Gross, 567–602. New York: Harper & Row, 1959.

When Does Utopianism Produce Dystopia?

GREGORY CLAEYS | PROFESSOR, ROYAL HOLLOWAY,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

1. Introduction

Friedrich Hayek once observed that “Utopia, like ideology, is a bad word today.”¹ Yet like the Christian devil, bad words may indeed rule this world like some inescapable curse on humanity. Their joint sovereignty over us is usually associated with the twentieth-century regimes called totalitarian, and it is the relation between utopia and Nazism and Stalinism that is accordingly explored here. Writers like Hayek have assumed that the quest for utopia, usually conceived of as some form of near-perfect society, is causally linked to such regimes, and is practically synonymous with the excesses of Hitler and Stalin. My own perspective at the outset here, however, is that of the skeptical ally of utopia. The concept possesses an indisputable utility both in providing projections of the futures we might have to contend with and in marshalling those reserves of idealism we require to cope with them. Yet those friendly to utopia rarely endeavor to meet its many critics head on. Often the latter are dismissed as reactionaries who simplistically conflate fascism, totalitarianism, communism, socialism, and utopianism.² There remains, too, the tacit fear that confronting the catastrophes of totalitarianism would tarnish the brand “utopia” even further in the eyes of an already skeptical general

¹ Friedrich Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), 64–65. I am grateful to the participants of the workshop on “Ideology and Utopia” held at the Central European University, Budapest, in March 2014, and particularly to Zsolt Czigányik, for their comments on the presentation that this article is based upon.

² This is the tendency in Ruth Levitas, *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), 7–11.

public, for which, in common parlance, the term still means “absurd” or “unrealistic.” Yet it might also be contended that if the concept of utopia is to remain useable, it must survive such a confrontation. As confronting Stalinism is thus a starting point for defending social democracy, understanding totalitarianism is thus the very starting point of any late-modern utopian outlook.³ If utopia produces dystopia, in a nutshell, with even only a reasonable degree of inevitability, let us have done with it once and for all. So even for allies of utopia, such a confrontation is both necessary and useful.

So how far *is* utopianism part of totalitarianism, or theoretically or causally related to it? This is, clearly, a definitional issue at the outset, and so an assessment of terms is necessary at the outset here. I will then look at a schema of utopian projections before turning to the totalitarian dystopia. My concentration here will be on the now well-grounded hypothesis that utopia has been most prone to produce dystopia when it assumes the shape of a “political religion.” Finally, I will try to modify this hypothesis somewhat by disaggregating the millenarian and other components within supposed “political religions” in order to see what is left once the more destructive elements in modern utopianism have been winnowed out.

2. The Definitional Problem

Utopia clearly cannot be used helpfully if it is simply a term of abuse, or indicates anything an author does not approve of, or represents the assumption that any and all forms of capitalism are superior to any form of *utopianism*. While it has been defined as a kind of “social dreaming” (in Lyman Tower Sargent’s formulation)⁴ or the “desire for a better way of being” (in Ruth Levitas’ definition),⁵ in the most predominant common language definition, *utopian* echoes “nowhere,” rather than *eutopia*, the

³ Ibid., 8. Thus I think Levitas is quite wrong to assume that “laying totalitarianism at the door of utopia is a political move that is intended to make any aspiration to social change impossible.” To the contrary, recognizing the relations between the two is a *sine qua non* for advancing any utopian strategy in the twenty-first century.

⁴ Lyman Tower Sargent, *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 5. This is the definition preferred by Sargent.

⁵ Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 7.

good place. It thus means “impossible.” In particular, this implies that attempting grand schemes of social and political transformation that demand a substantial improvement in human behavior pushes humanity beyond the limits of its moral capability and is bound to result in failure, if not, when driven by revolutionary violence, complete catastrophe. If, in particular, *utopia* means the “perfect” society, it is by definition unrealizable. Thus Leszek Kołakowski tells us that “the idea of the perfect and everlasting human fraternity . . . is the common and permanent core of Utopian thinking.”⁶

Juxtaposed to this view are a number of scholarly definitions. Historically, besides the broad idea of any kind of imaginary or idealized society, utopia is often specifically associated with Plato, Sparta, and Thomas More, and with the themes of equality, communism, and what I have termed “enhanced sociability.” It has a bearing, in the interpretation of David Wootton in particular, upon More’s interpretation of Aristotle’s idea of friendship, filtered through Pythagoras as well as through More’s close friend Erasmus.⁷ Historians stress, however, that while they exhibit many varied types with a bewildering array of themes juxtaposed within the genre, utopias do not usually portray a “perfect” society. J. C. Davis distinguishes utopia from the millennium, the perfect moral commonwealth, and the imagery of the Land of Cockaigne and Arcadia. To Davis the “utopian mode is one which accepts deficiencies in men and nature and strives to contain them through organizational controls and sanctions.”⁸ Literary utopias presume an improvement of human behavior, but crime and vice often still exist (and in More’s *Utopia*, war and slavery too). But utopianism is a broader concept, and now is usually agreed to consist of three components: communities, ideologies, and literary representations.⁹ In all these manifestations, it involves a stress on commu-

⁶ Leszek Kołakowski, “The Death of Utopia Reconsidered,” in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Value*, vol. 4, ed. Sterling M. McMurrin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 237.

⁷ See Gregory Claeys, “News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia,” *History* 98 (2013): 145–73. Wootton’s interpretation is outlined in David Wootton, introduction to *Utopia: With Erasmus’s “The Sileni of Alcibiades,”* by Thomas More, ed. David Wootton (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Co., 1999).

⁸ J. C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 370.

⁹ See Lyman Tower Sargent, “The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited,” *Utopian Studies* 5 (1994): 1–37.

nalism and sociability that is often stronger than that in the outside society. This enhanced sociability is distinguished from the everyday sociability or *Gesellschaft* of societies based upon the exchange of goods and services. It is thus akin to Ferdinand Tönnies' well-known portrayal of *Gemeinschaft* as a contrasting communal ideal.¹⁰ Its organization involves some sacrifice of individuality to the social, and of individual gain to the common good. This exchange is one that small-scale voluntary religious groups and other forms of intentional community have often willingly made. Indeed it is the essence of "belongingness" and group identity everywhere, whenever we exchange individual weakness and psychological fragility for the power of numbers and the indomitable ego of the collective. At its most extreme, however, it demands such a sacrifice of individuality as to present itself as dystopian to modern readers—this is not an atypical reaction to More's text by first-time readers. This issue of group identity is thus at the core of the relationship between utopia and dystopia, though I cannot pursue it further here.¹¹ Clearly, however, when utopia demands the extreme sacrifice of individual well-being to the group and coincides with hysteria and hatred of and extreme violence toward outsiders, we verge on dystopia, understood as a regime of maximized coercion, violence, and fear. Here, for the modern period, Nazism and Stalinism are the characteristic types.

At the outset, then, we can safely say that a broader definition of utopia makes it clear that utopia does not always imply the pursuit of perfectibility, and is not as such identical to dystopia. Utopia is not synonymous with perfectionism, but represents a guided improvement of human behavior. Perfectionism is a religious category. Utopia is not. Christianity seeks beatitude; Utopia, maximized happiness. Many commentators, and too many utopians, have confused the two. Nor is dystopia the same as "communism." Communal property holding has been the norm throughout much of human history. When engaged in voluntarily, it is frequently associated with successful and long-lived communities. Nor are utopia and dystopia so much opposites as points on a spectrum of sociability. Before ascertaining when utopia is most likely to produce dystopia, let us first examine a range of potential utopias to get a sense of the breadth of the subject.

¹⁰ See Claeys, "News from Somewhere."

¹¹ See Gregory Claeys, *Dystopia: A Natural History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

3. Some Utopian Projections

The definitions offered above give us a range of at least thirteen distinct, if overlapping, types of utopias, or categories of fantastic projected social relations or states that verge on or overlap with the utopian. Some are more individual and psychological, but most are social, verging on the extremely collectivist. A brief description of each type is given below.

1. *The Utopia of Psychological Wholeness or Romantic Authentic Identity.* This often relies on some theory of alienation or estrangement, or spiritual or personal enlightenment. It may involve some conception of the return of the externalised self-as-God, as is implied in Marx's early idea of "human emancipation." It is linked to earlier conceptions of the idea of personal immortality, such as the Fountain of Youth.

2. *The Utopia of Total Pleasure/Happiness/Universal Hedonism.* This implies some form of Dionysian intoxication or permanent "happy hour," and may include ideas of psychedelic bliss, unending orgasm, euphoria, festival, carnival, and permanently feeling "good" or "happy."

3. *The Utopia of Personal Autonomy.* This presents an ideal of personal freedom from the coercion of others, but more psychologically than politically. William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) is a good example.

4. *The Utopia of the Recaptured Lost Golden Age.* This model assumes a primitive state of virtue and equality that can be recaptured or returned to.

5. *The Gemeinschaft Utopia.* As suggested above, this variant on the classical myth of the Golden Age (Rousseau, Marx, Tönnies) also contends for the possibility of a subsequent "natural" social order based on common will, common life, and a cooperative outlook. However, rather than returning to an earlier stage, it sometimes suggests that early historical stages of this form of association might be extended in the context of a later modern, diverse urban milieu.

6. *The Utopia of the Earthly Paradise.* This is one key original prototype in Christian Europe for the utopian model, and is linked to ideas of heaven

and Jerusalem, as well as to the medieval Cockaigne tradition of plenty without labor.

7. *The Utopia of Classlessness.* This is a variant on (5) and (6), which in Marx's vision of "full communism" in particular implies superceding class divisions and producing a higher equality based upon justice and plenty.

8. *The Republican Utopia of Order and Restraint.* This more traditional variant mixes communism and hierarchy. More's *Utopia* is paradigmatic here. Later variants may include stationary or steady-state non-growth economies, where avarice and luxury have been abolished. Property is typically limited by an agrarian law or taxation limits upon wealth.

9. *The Utopia of the Self-Rectifying and Universal Wealth-Providing Market.* This is the core assumption of so-called "free-market" liberalism, which presumes infinite growth based upon increasingly universal consumption and the globalization of world markets. It is linked from at least Francis Bacon onwards with assumptions about the justifiable domination and exploitation of nature by humanity. It usually presumes indefinite population growth and unlimited resources, two features that render it utopian in the negative sense.

10. *The Technological Utopia.* There are many variants on the theme that science and technology provide solutions to all known problems.

11. *The Utopia of the Abolition of Coercion or Authority.* Here liberalism, anarchism, and Marxism all share variations on an ideal of a "fully voluntary" and non-coercive society where autonomy from the arbitrary interference of others is the goal. In some variants law and property have been abolished, while in others they remain central. Some types of democratic theory are bound up with this ideal.

12. *The Utopia of Elite Political Virtue.* This model presumes that rule by a virtuous elite guarantees both social stability and the wisest possible governance. Variations on it commence with Plato's *Republic* and appear in works by More, James Harrington, and many later authors. Both the National Socialist and Leninist conceptions of the "party" share in these assumptions.

13. *The Utopia of Racial, Ethnic, or Class Purity.* Here the ideal or model order is guaranteed by harmony within the group. This might be the Nazis'

Social Darwinist “master race” ideal (though there are many variations), and the abolition of contending or enemy groups, such as the bourgeoisie and kulaks in Stalinism, is often implied by the model.

It will readily be conceded that some of these ideal types are whimsical and fantastic, mere *jeux d’esprit* or wish-images of personal power and/or indulgence. Others, however, constitute the core assumptions in the major ideologies of the modern period, and indicate the centrality of utopian propositions to all major strands of modern thought. Far from being marginal to mainstream social and political thought, utopianism is in fact central to it.

4. The Totalitarian Dystopia

We need now to consider which of these schemes promising utopia is most likely to deliver dystopia instead. The brief answer to this query is that those employing substantial coercion, usually in the shape of violence, most closely match this description. We presume that small-scale voluntary communities, even on the scale of monastic orders, have at least the tacit consent of their members, who are notionally free to leave. The frontier between utopia and dystopia is crossed with violence. Beyond it lies the nation as prison, or what we might term *carcerotopia*. If utopias build walls to keep others out, dystopias build them to keep their members in.¹²

The regimes usually referred to as “totalitarian” most closely fit this description. We do not have to search far to find allegations of their relationship to utopianism. The links established are usually both historical and conceptual. On the one hand, schemes for dramatic social reorganization can be traced from Plato through Thomas More and Thomas Müntzer to Marx and beyond. On the other, early attempts at the total control of public life through assuming one completely true moral outlook and the possibility of complete social engineering toward an ideal end link

¹² See Gregory Claeys, *Mill and Paternalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Readers will note here a clear parallel with John Stuart Mill’s harm principle. For a more specific application to the utopian tradition, see Peter Sederberg, “Coercion, Force, Violence, and Utopia,” in *Dissent and Affirmation: Essays in Honor of Mulford Q. Sibley*, ed. Arthur L. Kallenberg, J. Donald Moon, and Donald Sabia (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 49–66. On the concept of “carcerotopia” see my *Dystopia: A Natural History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

the nineteenth-century utopians in particular with totalitarianism. This line of thought originates at least as early as the nineteenth century itself, notably when one of its great exponents, Herbert Spencer, railed against “the coming slavery” that he thought collectivism to imply.¹³

But such themes are more commonly associated with the mid- and late-twentieth century. For Hayek, writing in 1945, communism and fascism resulted from the same statism, “the great Utopia,” which had produced socialism and social democracy. Democratic utopia, “the great Utopia of the last few generations,” was “unachievable” in principle.¹⁴ Karl Popper’s *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945) notably contrasted “piecemeal social engineering” to “Utopian social engineering,” and asserted that the “utopian approach,” which aimed at an “ideal state” and plotted a rational course for achieving it, originated with Plato. Popper thought any differences amongst utopian engineers invariably led “to the use of power instead of reason, i.e. to violence.”¹⁵ Attempting to create a state that was “wholly good” was “dangerous and pernicious,” “self-defeating,” and tended to lead to violence as the adherents of the one “Utopianist Religion” inevitably sought to eradicate all dissent. “Even with the best intentions of making heaven on earth,” he contended, such utopianism “only succeeds in making it a hell—that hell which man alone prepares for his fellow-men.”¹⁶

Thus too, to Norman Cohn, the process by which the “old religious idiom has been replaced by a secular one” formed part of the foundation of the ideas of the Third Reich and the communist ideal of a final stage of human development.¹⁷ Jacob Talmon insisted that “totalitarian coercion”

¹³ Herbert Spencer, *The Man versus the State* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1892), 18–42.

¹⁴ Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1945), 31.

¹⁵ Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 1, 157–58, 161. This definition Popper thought corresponded “largely, I believe, to what Hayek would call ‘centralized’ or ‘collectivist’ planning.” Ibid., 285.

¹⁶ Ibid., 168.

¹⁷ Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 108–10, 286. The phrase “Third Reich” came from Moeller Van Der Bruck’s *Das Dritte Reich*, published in 1923 and translated as *Germany’s Third Empire* by Emily O. Lorimer (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1934). The presumption that it would “end all strife” in particular echoes traditional ideas of heaven (See *Germany’s Third Empire*, 15). The leader of the Nazi Labour Front, Dr.

was inevitable because the complete agreement utopianism presumes was only possible through dictatorship. Utopianism meant

that one assumes as possible (or even expects as inevitable) an ultimate condition of absolute harmony in which individual self-expression and social cohesion, though seemingly incompatible, will be combined. . . . This combination is possible only if all individuals agree. All individuals, however, do not agree. Therefore, if you expect unanimity, there is ultimately no escape from dictatorship.¹⁸

And then to Kołakowski, as we have seen, “the idea of the perfect and everlasting human fraternity,” “the common and permanent core of Utopian thinking,” was “unconceivable.” Any attempt to implement it was “bound to produce a highly despotic society which, to simulate the impossible perfection, will stifle the expression of conflict, and thus destroy the life of culture, by a totalitarian coercion.”¹⁹ To one of the leading historians of Bolshevism, Robert Conquest, Popper’s “culture of sanity” contrasts societies underpinned by irrational taboos that oppose all change to those that promote critical public debate and scientific reasoning.²⁰ Conquest describes “despotic-utopian” regimes as rooted in the “archaic idea that utopia can be constructed on earth; the offer of a millenarian solution to human problems.”²¹ Here “utopianism” coincides with a dogmatic and essentially religious mentality, and, moreover, explicit millenarianism.²² There are a variety of other similar assertions. Vladimir Tismăneanu, for instance, considers the revolutions of 1989 to be “the end-point of the historical era ruled by utopia,” and in reference to Stalin, describes the “acme of radical utopianism” as an “all-pervading technology of socially oriented

Robert Ley, asserted that “the German people can become eternal only through National Socialism,” and thus could not have their loyalties shared with religion. Ley is quoted in Ihor Kamenetsky, “Totalitarianism and Utopia,” *Chicago Review* 16, no. 4 (1964): 122.

¹⁸ Jacob Talmon, “Utopianism and Politics,” in *Utopia*, ed. George Kateb (New York: Atherton Press, 1971), 92, 95.

¹⁹ Leszek Kołakowski, “The Death of Utopia Reconsidered,” 237.

²⁰ Robert Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century* (London: John Murray, 1999), 20.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

²² *Ibid.*, 92–93, 112–13.

murder.”²³ Jean-Luc Domenach asserts that “the intrusion of Utopia into politics coincided very closely with that of police terror in society.”²⁴ In Leonard Schapiro’s assessment, Marx’s utopia, the end of the state, becomes “the most dangerous utopia of all times,” the end of legal order and triumph of brute force.²⁵ Daniel Chirot condemns “illusory visions of utopia based on false notions of scientific certainty.”²⁶ To Martin Malia, “any realistic account of communist crimes would effectively shut the door on Utopia.”²⁷

These are serious and damning charges. Rescuing the concept of utopia in such circumstances would seem to be well-nigh impossible. To deny any link between utopianism and modern revolutionism would be fatuous, moreover, since even the revolutionaries themselves recognised a pedigree which ran, if not from More, then certainly from Thomas Müntzer to Marx and thence to Lenin—think of Kautsky’s study of More.²⁸ Nonetheless, many such allegations suffer from a lack of precision as to exactly which utopian qualities fuel totalitarianism. In particular, as has been noted, there is a constant tendency for “utopia” and “religion” to overlap in such descriptions. It is logical, thus, to consider further one of the leading explanations for the peculiar ferocity of twentieth-century totalitarianism, namely the hypothesis that its most destructive examples, Nazism and Stalinism, assumed the character of political religions.

5. The Political Religion Hypothesis

As developed by Eric Voegelin, Norman Cohn, Michael Burleigh, and others, the political religion hypothesis suggests that both Nazism and Stalinism assumed many qualities of a secular religion. Both aped the ceremonies, rituals, and beliefs of religion in a secular form, worshipping leaders, avowing sacred doctrines, inventing a sacred history and a divine

²³ Vladimir Tismăneanu, *The Devil in History: Communism, Fascism, and Some Lessons of the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 45, 68.

²⁴ Quoted in Stéphane Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 492.

²⁵ Quoted in Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*, 35.

²⁶ Daniel Chirot, *Modern Tyrants: The Power and Prevalence of Evil in Our Age* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 341.

²⁷ Quoted in Tismăneanu, *The Devil in History*, 49.

²⁸ Karl Kautsky, *Thomas More und seine Utopie* (Stuttgart, 1888).

mandate for their actions, creating a priesthood in their parties, and persecuting their opponents as heretics. A sense of holiness pervaded their self-conscious assertions of superiority. The Bolsheviks in particular proclaimed the infallibility of the party as robustly as any good Catholic ever did the Pope's, and Chekists studied the Inquisition's manuals for helpful hints on eradicating heresy. This analysis in terms of a religious mentality, and sometimes associated with Catholicism in particular, helps to explain a good part of the hysteria, hatred, and intolerance of these groups. It links Bolshevism and Nazism to a Manichaean worldview and to certain forms of millenarian Christianity extending throughout the ages and into the modern period. It portrays the Nazi and Bolshevik parties as reborn sectarian emanations from an extreme Christian ideal of self-sacrifice for the common good and the abolition of egoism in the subsumption of the individual in the social whole or larger group. It draws analogies between the totalizing qualities of religion and those of these ideologies. It builds upon contemporary allegations that moral nihilism and hostility to Christianity played a key role in Nazi aspirations.²⁹

But there are weaknesses in this approach too. It does not penetrate far enough into the psychology of religion itself, but dwells merely on shared qualities. To secularists the issue of "political religion," whether in the form of medieval heresy or of modern totalitarianism, may ultimately be a problem inherent in most forms of religion, or a problem rooted in moral dualism rather than either religion or politics. Any binary system that describes the need for the good to triumph over the evil and then codes one's earthly enemies as evil is a recipe for bloodletting. At the other extreme, however, many of those who propose this analysis take the opposite tack and assume that the only means of opposing totalitarianism are in fact religious: in Voegelin's words, "Satanic substance can only be opposed by an equally strong religiously good force of resistance." Here the "secularisation of life" is regarded as the dreaded malaise that permits a reversion to barbarism.³⁰ "De divinization" is held to account for "dehumanization."³¹

²⁹ Hermann Rauschning, *Germany's Revolution of Destruction* (London: William Heinemann, 1939), 96–97.

³⁰ Eric Voegelin, *Political Religions* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 2.

³¹ "The denial of the nonexistent reality of transcending toward divine being destroys the *imago Dei*. Man becomes dehumanized. The suffering from the meaninglessness of a Godforsaken existence leads to outbreaks of concupiscent fantasy, to the grotesque creation of a 'new man'—of Marx's and Nietzsche's supermen." Eric Voegelin. *Hitler and the Germans* (University of Missouri Press, 1999), p. 263.

The implication here is both that only respect for the godly component in people can induce respect for them as human beings, and we are told to contemplate the “presence of God” and another world.³² To the degree in which we live in an ever more secular world, however, this solution becomes increasingly implausible, if not indeed contradictory, since to an extent it counsels exactly what it complains of, religious zeal. Yet particularly in the 1940s it was widely believed that secularization had produced such results. Orwell, amongst others, tussled with the problem of the decline of religious belief, and freely confessed that “when men stop worshipping god they promptly start worshipping Man, with disastrous results.”³³ But he had no solution to this apparent contradiction either.

6. The Political Religion Hypothesis Modified: Millenarianism, Antinomianism, and Utopia Disaggregated

It does not seem that positing a merely analogous, if secular, religious mentality as such explains the “Holy Terror” of Nazism and Stalinism. But particular focus on two facets of the religious mentality may go further in this direction.

(a) Millennium and the Apocalypse: The Pretext

Without doubt the sense of a millenarian quality of finality with which the concept of revolution was invested from 1789 onwards, but especially after 1917, formed an important part of the transcendental supra-morality of social transformation. Edward Shils, introducing the work of Georges Sorel, described this in terms of an “ethic of crisis” which could be “resolved only by an apocalyptic transformation in which *everything* is *totally* changed.”³⁴ Having derided heaven as an illusion, Marxism effectively invested vastly more in the possibility, indeed inevitability, of the workers’ paradise. To the Bolsheviks, “revolution” became a heavily fetishised category invoking a “second coming”; a quasi-sacred and semi-

³² Ibid., 71, 159.

³³ *The Observer*, July 22, 1945, quoted in John Atkins, *George Orwell* (London: Calder & Boyars, 1971), 27.

³⁴ Edward Shils, Introduction to George Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (New York: Collier Books, 1950), 15. Emphasis in original.

mystical transformation of both society and the individual, a revolution promised the wiping clean of the tarnished slate of the old corrupt society, the expulsion of the moneylenders from the temple, and the commencement of a new world. Dramatic moral change was assumed to follow as a consequence. Raymond Aron thus termed Bolshevism “a Christian heresy” that “as a modern form of millenarianism . . . places the kingdom of God on earth following the apocalyptic revolution in which the Old World will be swallowed up.”³⁵ Whatever evils needed to be done to accomplish this would eventuate in good ends. In György Lukács’s telling phrase, “The conviction of the true Communist is that evil transforms itself unto bliss through the dialectics of historical evolution.”³⁶ The root utopian principle that private property was the source of all crime was itself the basis of some of this optimism, and echoed the sense of a return to the state of nature or Golden Age, and of the purity and innocence of an original communism. For the Nazis too revolution became an end in itself as well as a perpetual process of becoming. It represented a transvaluation of values, with all preceding bankrupt ethical systems and institutions being replaced by “devotion to the revolutionary movement for its own sake.”³⁷

(b) *“To us, everything is permitted”: Grace and Revolutionary Antinomianism*

If the holy moment of revolution provides a vital pretext for insisting upon total and dramatic change at any price, the identification of its agents with an elite of “chosen” ones, as “saints” or the “elect” (so rarely the *elected*, however), is still more crucial. Thomas Müntzer had already represented the movement in religion from a concentration on people’s relation to God through the Church and temporal authorities to the renovation of the spirit from within.³⁸ This would become the starting point for the analysis commenced in 1936 by Karl Mannheim and then

³⁵ Quoted in Tismăneanu, *The Devil in History*, 90.

³⁶ Melvin Lasky, *Utopia and Revolution* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 53.

³⁷ Rauschnig, *Germany’s Revolution of Destruction*, 61.

³⁸ Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Thomas Müntzer* (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1993), 204–5; Alberto Toscano, *Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea* (London: Verso, 2010), 71.

extended most effectively by Norman Cohn.³⁹ This principle of spiritual renewal, akin to baptism, became integral to the revolutionary process even before 1917. To its commissars, the Communist Party came to offer an entire way of life and its own worldview, with the “utopia of a new humanity” giving members, in François Furet’s phrasing, both meaning in life and “the comforts of certainty.”⁴⁰ More than this, it freed them from the constraints of a historically outmoded “bourgeois” morality. This is not everyday religion, but a very specific phase or mode of religious consciousness. The revolutionary priesthood of the party was essentially invested with the same attributes of the supramoral ideal of grace, blessedness, or holiness, akin to being immediately favoured by God and directly under divine guidance. The sense of being in a state of secular grace, clearly present in some variants of both Nazi and Marxist revolutionary practice, permits the suspension of most moral norms.⁴¹ In the Stalinist case, history was assumed to absolve the use of any means to achieve its end, for the proletariat’s moral perspective was a transcendent one, immanent in the historical moment. In one of the most telling instances of the Bolshevik mentality in this regard, a Cheka functionary claimed to reject “the old systems of morality and ‘humanity’ invented by the bourgeoisie to oppress and exploit the ‘lower classes,’” asserting instead that “Our morality has no precedent, and our humanity is absolute because it rests on a new ideal. . . . To us, everything is permitted, for we are the first to raise the sword not to oppress races and reduce them to slavery, but to liberate humanity from its shackles . . . let our flag be blood-red forever.”⁴² This revolutionary antinomianism, the sense that a higher purposes releases one from being bound to earthly laws, was of immense importance in permitting the bloodletting of Stalinism in particular. We can term it a state of secular grace.

³⁹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1936); Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1957).

⁴⁰ François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1999), ix.

⁴¹ I here depart from the description of the concept of “grace” applied to the utopian mentality by Levitas. See *Utopia as Method*, 11–19. Drawing on Paul Tillich, Levitas contends that utopia ought to be understood as a secular form of grace in the sense of a state of freedom from sin. See *Ibid.*, 13. This is evidently an attempt to portray utopia as a state of psychological wholeness.

⁴² Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism*, 102.

The proclamation of such a state of secular grace was also intimately linked to the intense feeling of group identification among party members. Both the Nazi and Bolshevik parties became quasi-holy orders, all-consuming in their demand for loyalty, all-powerful in their claims to primacy in each member's identity. To Bolsheviks, the idea of revolutionary racialism or proletarian morality united the party as a "fraternal comradeship of the righteous."⁴³ Akin to the love of God, such a powerful sense of group identity left little place for individual responsibility. The party came to think abstractly and act concretely for each member. Love for the party was also dialectically related to hatred of its enemies. Like many other groups, the party group bonded by its negative self-definition against outsiders and "enemies." Within such groups there is a tendency for intense love to be intimately related to intense hatred.

The emotional state of the true believer in this context is not complicated. Belonging to these privileged, sacrosanct groups clearly has exhilarating, intoxicating, addictive, and almost electric or magnetic qualities.⁴⁴ The release from an overwhelming weight, from the humdrum world of normality, and the surge of energy that this release brings, must inevitably be accompanied by such feelings. So too does the powerful sense of missionary zeal and devotion to the cause that unites the party. We see here how a willingness to sacrifice the mere mortals who stand in the way of such an emotional tsunami is easily attained. The more ascetic, purist, and demanding the party becomes, the less forgiveness there is for all who fall short of these ideals, including ourselves. Here a profound sense of guilt may also play a central role in group ferocity. The quality of sainthood is sometimes merciless because our inner demons make it so.

But the intense, quasi-religious qualities delineated here do not as such explain the violence of totalitarianism, especially as experienced in the Holocaust and the Gulag. This extreme violence derived from several sources, including Social Darwinism, racism, and hatred of the Jews in the case of the Nazis, and class hatred of the bourgeoisie, kulaks, and intellectuals, and the breakneck speed with which revolution spurred on modernization in the cases of the USSR and China in particular. (Here the profoundly tragic case of Cambodia, where around a quarter of the population died or were killed in only four years, is a peculiar one.) We know

⁴³ The phrase is from Andrzej Walicki, *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 473.

⁴⁴ Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*, 127. Conquest uses "addiction" to describe adherence to Marxism.

through the remarkable contributions of first Alexander Solzhenitsyn and then later generations who chronicled the destruction of Mao and Pol Pot, that red terror, if only because it lasted much longer, was ultimately even more destructive than Nazism. For those on the Left this lesson has been slow to digest, for it is immensely disillusioning. But that does not make it less salutary or necessary.

7. Conclusion: Utopia, Dystopia, Totalitarianism

Let me draw to a conclusion. Much of the last section here boils down to a plea in particular to disentangle utopianism from millenarianism. Political religions are secular forms of regimes or ideologies with religious content. Particularly communism, with its messiahs, promise of earthly salvation, “revelation” of sacred texts, and ceremonies of worship fits this formulation. As such, political religions at times behave in a manner uncomfortably close to many types of utopian thought and aspiration. Indeed, as John Gray (largely under Cohn’s influence) suggests, perhaps all modern politics can be conceived of as being a substitute for religious salvation, and as promising of the triumph of good over evil.⁴⁵ Yet if political religion played a major role in generating and fuelling totalitarianism, it is nonetheless evident that it was the combination of revolutionary antinomianism, reckless modernization, and the cult of violence that produced the most devastating effects. The demand for the creation of a new humanity, baptized in the crucible of revolution, inevitably failed. But it failed in part precisely because the assumption of change was essentially religious. We saw earlier that utopianism aimed historically not at a perfect society but only at one that was much improved. When it seeks perfectibility the results can be catastrophic. The intermixture of millenarianism and revolutionary perfectionism shared by both Nazism and Stalinism induced a hysterical brand of antinomian extremism in which any means justified the “final” end.

Many forms of utopianism, however, offer no millenarian promises and avoid not only revolutionary means but violence in general. The modest utopia of the welfare state, for instance, has usually been intro-

⁴⁵ John Gray, *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 17. He adds that “Utopian projects are by their nature unachievable.”

duced by democratic means. Many literary utopias have foreseen the great progress to be accomplished by scientific and technological advancement. And, to give the standard utopian trope its due, the case has been proven statistically that more equal societies are much happier, on the whole, than less equal ones.⁴⁶ We may well agree with Popper that “one cannot make heaven on earth,” and that to try to do so is misconceived.⁴⁷ (And heaven, in any case, seems to be a pretty totalitarian model anyway.) Yet Popper also urged us to build hospitals and schools, and to avoid concrete evils, thus conceding, it seems to me, one persistently valuable vision of a better future.⁴⁸ But this implies that “more liberty” is not the answer to many of our problems. For we know that social and economic freedom too often benefits the pike at the expense of the minnows.

It would be a mistake, then, to suggest that the secularization of millenarian goals in totalitarian politics nullifies utopianism as such. Millenarianism doubtless represents one form of utopianism, perhaps even its most dangerous yet compelling incarnation. The anticipation of a rapid, total moral transformation from the fallen humanity after Eden to achieving moral perfection invariably invites both disaster and punishment. Utopia may be both achieved and maintained without this process of conversion—gradually, reasonably, and tolerantly. Its virtues need not be puritanical, repressive, and dogmatic. After the intoxication of Bolshevism we have been left with the biggest hangover in intellectual history. Yet that is no reason to leave off all social reverie, though it perhaps commends beer over whiskey. But among the categories of utopias briefly delineated earlier, what else remains of use? We should not aim for unanimity, the undifferentiated community, sainthood, or compulsory solidarity. Engineering the more extreme forms of equality seems off the menu, though the inequality we have created in the last forty years will doubtlessly generate class hatred once again—for instance, in the form of anti-Semitism. No modern reader would want to inhabit Plato’s *Republic*, More’s *Utopia*, or most of their imitators. Some might however endorse a Fourierist taste for varied and more individualist communitarianism. Many more

⁴⁶ Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* (London: Allen Lane, 2009).

⁴⁷ Karl Popper, “Utopia and Violence,” *The Hibbert Journal* 46 (1947–8): 112, 114–15.

⁴⁸ “Work for the elimination of concrete evils rather than for the realisation of abstract goods. Do not aim at establishing happiness by political means. Rather aim at elimination of concrete miseries.” *Ibid.*, 114.

might want to live in a liberal republic in which toleration is progressively extended to embrace hitherto oppressed groups. Any modern utopia will have to start with H. G. Wells's axiom that utopias must now be kinetic or evolutionary, incorporating change into their very nature, rather than static. Second, it must recognize and make as a key goal "individual difference as the significance of life."⁴⁹ These are among the lessons of 1989–91. Those of the subsequent decades are so clear that even Gray recognizes a "universal stationary state may well be a Utopia; but it is a better measuring-rod for attainable improvement in the human lot than the wholly unrealisable fantasy of infinite growth."⁵⁰

It seems more likely that in the coming decades the fervor of utopian endeavor will be concentrated more on the avoidance of dystopia than the embrace of utopia. But here the pursuit of utopia may well be the only way of avoiding dystopia. Without an image of a future we would like to inhabit, we will be condemned to drive off the cliff of modernity at high speed, music blaring. Ecological apocalypse faces us in perhaps a paltry few decades. Yet we flounder rudderless, buffeted by financial panic, beset yet again by crude ethnic chauvinism, lurching toward a nightmarish security state while avoiding any confrontation with our bleak ecological future and the population bomb threatening us. We blindly worship "growth" as if our spaces and resources were unlimited, and, conditioned by the behavioral reinforcements beloved by B. F. Skinner and lampooned by Huxley, chase the deceitful glittering baubles of consumerism ever more fervently. Certainly it is much better to be manipulated than to be murdered. But if utopia is not best conceived as a blueprint or a path toward certainty, it can nonetheless be understood as a map in which the swamps, deserts, mountains, and plains are clearly outlined; the habitable domains are distinguished from *terra incognita*; and the friendly natives marked off from the hostile. With prophecy once again a useful pursuit, dystopia allows us to see what we need to avoid. An image of the future allows us to calibrate our current paths of development and to help us, as Mannheim put it, "to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time."⁵¹

⁴⁹ H. G. Wells, *A Modern Utopia* (London: Collins Clear Type Press, n.d.), 14. On Wells's conception of the individual, see R. D. Haynes, *H. G. Wells: Discoverer of the Future* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 163–96.

⁵⁰ John Gray, *Beyond the New Right* (London: Routledge, 1993), 142.

⁵¹ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 173.

We have here, then, two quite different visions of utopia. One demands, or at least imagines, some kind of perfect fraternity or sociability, the satisfaction of needs, and considerable social equality. The other imagines a considerably better world than the dystopias facing us, and a much-improved version of the one we now inhabit. From the latter perspective, many a past utopia—the welfare state being one—has been realized already, if not necessarily preserved in perpetuity. Utopia thus has much more to offer us than totalitarianism: it still provides a vision of the good society, not heaven on earth. We must learn from these catastrophes, but among other things, not abandon the hope of creating a decent life for all. Wells also wrote that the “human mind has always accomplished progress by its construction of Utopias.”⁵² Five years before the so-called Iron Curtain fell, György Konrád lamented that “civil society is still only an idea; let us look at ourselves here in Budapest as if from the island of Utopia.”⁵³ We might today revisit that sentiment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atkins, John. *George Orwell*. London: Calder & Boyars, 1971.
- Chiriot, Daniel. *Modern Tyrants: The Power and Prevalence of Evil in Our Age*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.
- Claeys, Gregory. *Dystopia: A Natural History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- . *Mill and Paternalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- . “News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia.” *History* 98 (April 2013): 145–73.
- Cohn, Norman. *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1957.
- . *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Conquest, Robert. *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*. London: John Murray, 1999.
- Courtois, Stéphane, Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Paczkowski, Karel Bartošek, and Jean-Louis Margolin, eds. *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Davis, J. C. *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516–1700*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Furet, François. *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

⁵² Quoted in Benjamin Kidd, *The Science of Power* (London: Methuen & Co., 1920), 151.

⁵³ György Konrád, *Antipolitics: An essay* (London: Verso, 1984), 82.

- Goertz, Hans-Jürgen. *Thomas Müntzer*. Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1993.
- Gray, John. *Beyond the New Right*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- . *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*. London: Allen Lane, 2007.
- Hayek, Friedrich. *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973.
- . *The Road to Serfdom*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1945.
- Haynes, R. D. *H.G. Wells: Discoverer of the Future*. New York: Macmillan, 1980.
- Kamenetsky, Ihor. "Totalitarianism and Utopia." *Chicago Review* 16, no. 4 (1964): 114–59.
- Kautsky, Karl. *Thomas More und seine Utopie*. Stuttgart, 1888.
- Kidd, Benjamin. *The Science of Power*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.
- Kolakowski, Leszek. "The Death of Utopia Reconsidered." In *The Tanner Lectures on Human Value*, vol. 4, edited by Sterling M. McMurrin, 227–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Konrád, György. *Antipolitics: An essay*. London: Verso, 1984.
- Lasky, Melvin. *Utopia and Revolution*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
- Levitas, Ruth. *The Concept of Utopia*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990.
- . *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013.
- Mannheim, Karl. *Ideology and Utopia*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1936.
- Moeller Van Der Bruck, Arthur. *Germany's Third Empire*. Translated by Emily O. Lorimer. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1934. Originally published as *Das Dritte Reich* (Berlin: Ring Verlag, 1923).
- Popper, Karl. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966.
- . "Utopia and Violence." *The Hibbert Journal* 46 (1947–8): 109–16.
- Rauschnig, Hermann. *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*. London: William Heinemann, 1939.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited." *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37.
- . *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Sederberg, Peter. "Coercion, Force, Violence, and Utopia." In *Dissent and Affirmation: Essays in Honor of Mulford Q. Sibley*, edited by Arthur L. Kallenberg, J. Donald Moon, and Donald Sabia, 49–66. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.
- Shils, Edward. Introduction to *Reflections on Violence* by George Sorel. New York: Collier Books, 1950.
- Spencer, Herbert. *The Man versus the State*. London: Williams & Norgate, 1892.
- Talmon, Jacob. "Utopianism and Politics." In *Utopia*, edited by George Kateb, 91–102. New York: Atherton Press, 1971.
- Tismăneanu, Vladimir. *The Devil in History: Communism, Fascism, and Some Lessons of the Twentieth Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012.

- Toscano, Alberto. *Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea*. London: Verso, 2010.
- Voegelin, Eric. *Hitler and the Germans*. University of Missouri Press, 1999.
- . *Political Religions*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.
- Walicki, Andrzej. *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995.
- Wells, H. G. *A Modern Utopia*. London: Collins Clear Type Press, n.d.
- Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett. *The Spirit Level: Why Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*. London: Allen Lane, 2009.
- Wootton, David. Introduction to *Utopia: With Erasmus's "The Sileni of Alcibiades,"* by Thomas More. Edited by David Wootton. Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Co., 1999.

From the Political Utopia to the Philosophical Utopia—and Rescuing the Political Utopia, on Second Thought

FÁTIMA VIEIRA | UNIVERSITY OF PORTO

In the chapter I wrote for the *Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, I set out to offer an outline of the history of the concept of utopia by highlighting the way the meaning of the neologism created by Thomas More has changed over the centuries.¹ As I evinced then, after its deneologization the concept of utopia underwent several semantic renewals, having been used by different authors to refer to a variety of things. This fluctuation of meaning, I then tried to show, was largely due to the never-ending tension that prevails between the concept of *utopia* (literally a “nonplace”) and that of *eutopia* (a “good place”).

According to some scholars, this tension originates in an apparently inescapable idea of circularity. Louis Marin describes it as a “well-formed proposition” that Thomas More subtly conveyed to the reader, thus leading him to despair: “happiness is not of this world, the end of this world is happiness.”² This circularity certainly creates a paradox, and it could well be that More generated it without intending to offer a solution. Marin is very clear as to the aim of utopian discourse: “Not only is utopia not ‘realizable,’ but it could not be realized without destroying itself. The very function of utopia requires that it not indicate the ways and means of its effectuation, nor signify the goal to be attained and propose *for construction* the perfect City. Utopia is not tomorrow, in time. It is *nowhere*, not

¹ See Fátima Vieira, “The Concept of Utopia,” in *Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3–27.

² Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (London: Macmillan, 1984), xx.

tomorrow nor once upon a time.”³ To Marin, the utopian discourse displays the “power of the negative in literary texts” and opens up blanks that will enable the expression of the once “inexpressible”—*le neutre*, as Maurice Blanchot called it.⁴ This is utopia’s major function and its ultimate end.

Marin’s praise of the utopian discourse is thus based on its ability to provide space for new ideas that are presented as food for thought rather than action plans. His approach to utopia is in fact coherent with the 1970s’ view of utopian literature. On the one hand, as a post-structuralist, he questions the referential function of texts (and thus neglects authorial intention).⁵ On the other hand, he responds to the 1950s’ and early 1960s’ passionate anti-utopian diatribes against utopian thinking, which had been inspired by Karl Popper’s denunciation of radical utopian engineering (as opposed to piecemeal social engineering).

But are we reduced to reading the tension between *utopia* and *eutopia* as resulting only in an endless circularity, however fruitful it may be in terms of the imagined alternatives? From my point of view, Fernando de Mello Moser presented a more productive approach when he suggested that utopia is informed by a dialectic structure that calls for the intervention of the reader. According to Moser, More provided the reader with a thesis (Book I) and an antithesis (Book II), and expected him to reach conclusions, to “write” the synthesis, thus escaping the circularity of the utopian discourse.⁶ In this essay I will ground my working hypothesis on the idea that a similar reasoning may be applied to contemporary utopian thinking. Although, as I will attest to below, utopia has lost the clear ideological commitment it used to have at the time of the grand utopian narratives, contemporary utopian thinking is still based on a dialectical strategy that the author expects the reader to be involved with. As in the dialectical method, utopian thinking provides us with different points of view about a subject and engages us in the pursuit of truth.

In a short video clip available on YouTube, the Uruguayan journalist, writer, and novelist Eduardo Galeano explains that he was once in the city of Cartagena de Indias, giving a presentation at the local university with the Argentinian film director Fernando Birri, when one of the stu-

³ Ibid., 344 (my emphasis).

⁴ Eugene Hill, “The Place of the Future: Louis Marin and his Utopiques,” *Science Fiction Studies* 9 (July 1982): 171.

⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 177.

⁶ Fernando de Mello Moser, *Tomás More e os Caminhos da Perfeição Humana* (Lisbon: Vega, 1982), 19–35.

dents asked Birri what the use of utopia was.⁷ According to Galeano, Birri offered an inspired definition, to which Galeano subscribed totally: utopia is on the horizon, and we know that we will never reach it—that if we walk ten steps toward it, it will walk ten steps away. But, he said, it is essential to our lives, as it inspires us to walk.

The success of this video clip (it easily reached over one million views) seems to indicate that the idea of utopia still appeals to many people. But it also appears to suggest that the prevailing idea of utopia is defined not in terms of its form or content, but rather in terms of its function. This picture is, however, very different from the one that Ruth Levitas describes in *The Concept of Utopia*. According to Levitas, the definition of utopia that focuses on its function is typical of the Marxist tradition, to which utopia either performs “a negative function of preventing social change or a positive function of facilitating it, either directly or through the process of the ‘education of desire.’”⁸ In the case of the definition presented by Galeano, the idea of desire is clearly conveyed, but it entails rather a process of “education *for* desire.” Utopia is above all defined as a driving force (the moving hope Ernst Bloch has so insistently described),⁹ and the nature of the horizon seems to have only a relative importance.

This definition of utopia seems to be consistent with the attitude that prevailed among utopian scholars in the 1950s and early 1960s, when the end of ideology was proclaimed, and after 1989, when the death of utopia was announced. As Lyman Sargent put it, “the case against utopia,” headed by Karl Popper, was mainly built upon the idea that utopia entails the notion of perfection, thus not providing space for change. As this utopia presents a blueprint informed by a human rationality that does not admit invariables, it is thus more likely to bring about dystopia to those on which the new social order is to be imposed. On the other hand, the “case for utopia,” which has found in Ernst Bloch its most enthusiastic proponent, was informed by the idea that utopia is an absolute necessity, innate to the human species, giving expression to an imagination that, grounded in a good knowledge of human reality, provides the reader with

⁷ “Eduardo Galeano (1940/2015) - El Derecho al Delirio (Legend),” YouTube video, posted by “Enzo de León,” July 3, 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-pgHIB8QdQ>.

⁸ Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 6.

⁹ “It is a question of learning hope” asserts Ernst Bloch in the introduction to his monumental *The Principle of Hope* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1996), vol. 1: 3.

positive images of the future that are meant to inspire the creation of a better society.¹⁰

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union gave strength to the idea that utopian narratives should be dismissed as dangerous. It was thus within this framework that the advocates of utopia started enhancing its function and marginalizing its content. The notion that utopias are not strictly informed by a political plan provided the basis for the distinction between the *political utopia* (which entails a political project) and the *philosophical utopia* (which implies a utopian attitude). The success of the video clip where Galeano explains that utopia is set on a horizon that is never meant to be reached indicates that it is the philosophical view that informs contemporary utopianism. It seems, however, to provide ground for Marin's reading of utopianism as an unsolvable tension. Does it mean that the philosophical utopia does not provide the reader with space to perform his agency? On which principles is the philosophical utopia grounded, how does it operate, and what does it demand from its readers?

The philosophical utopia has found one of its most passionate advocates in the Portuguese philosopher and educational sciences expert Adalberto Dias de Carvalho. In order to draw the distinction between the political utopia and the philosophical utopia, Dias de Carvalho resorts to two French philosophers. From Giles Deleuze, Dias de Carvalho borrows the idea that we have to distinguish between the concepts of *présent* and *actuel*.¹¹ Participating in a conference on the philosophical work of Michel Foucault in 1988, Deleuze explained the difference between these two concepts and how instrumental they are to the understanding of the Foucauldian perspective of time. On the one hand is what we already are (our *présent*), which is part of history; on the other hand is what we are becoming (the *actuel*). History is the archive, what we are and what we have ceased to be, while the *actuel* is what we are becoming, a sort of "another-becoming."¹² The new "paths of creation"¹³—as Deleuze termed

¹⁰ Sargent, Lyman Tower, *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 103–11.

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

¹² Gilles Deleuze, "Foucault, Historien du présent," *Magazine littéraire* 257 (September 1988): <http://libertaire.free.fr/DeleuzeFoucault03.html>. The French term that Deleuze used was "devenir-autre."

¹³ *Ibid.*, "Chemins de créations" is the original in French.

it—are inscribed on the level of the *actuel*, of what we are becoming.¹⁴ Elaborating on these ideas, Dias de Carvalho elucidates that for Deleuze, the *présent* is the historical present, in function of which both past and future are situated; the *actuel* is inscribed in the *avenir*—another form of time, a time of philosophy, which needs to be understood as a counter-time of history. As Dias de Carvalho explains, although the *actuel* is born out of history and never ceases to interact with it, it cannot be reduced to history because it does not aspire to be fulfilled in it. It is, above all, a “time of becoming,” full of possibilities.¹⁵ This conception of time, Dias de Carvalho claims, is characteristic not of the political utopia, but of the philosophical utopia, which is inscribed in the *avenir* under the form of a counter-time of history, asserting, in this sense, a critical negativity with regard to the present.

The philosophical utopia described by Dias de Carvalho has an additional characteristic that he tries to explain by resorting to the ideas of the French philosopher Henri Maler. Maler, in fact, offered a workable distinction between the political utopia and the philosophical utopia by contrasting the concepts of *ideal* and *idealization*. According to Maler, the philosophical utopia belongs to the realm of the ideal, and is very different from the concept of the *project*, which belongs to the realm of the idealization. The political-ideological utopia is based on the coincidence of the idealization with the ideal; in the philosophical utopia, Maler suggests, the ideal always exceeds the idealization.¹⁶ Maler thus values the notion of utopian surplus put forward by Ernst Bloch, and contends that this surplus is needed because it makes the utopia dynamic at the same time that it discloses a critical awareness of what is being idealized.

The notion of philosophical utopia thus defined by Dias de Carvalho seems to suit the idea of utopian thinking described by Galeano: contemporary utopian thinking does not offer blueprints, it explores possibilities. Although it may incite us to define the nature of our horizon (our ideal), it does not force us to stick to the end to our idealization, as the ideal is informed by a surplus of desire, which provides us with space for a constant redefinition, and is ready to accept the notion of error, which it

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Dias de Carvalho, “From Contemporary Utopias to Contemporaneity as a Utopia,” in *Utopia Matters: Theory, Politics, Literature and the Arts*, ed. Fátima Vieira and Marinela Freitas (Porto: Editora da Universidade de Porto, 2005), 16.

¹⁶ Henri Maler, *Convoïter l’Impossible: L’Utopie avec Marx, malgré Marx* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1995), 351.

incorporates when reformulating its new horizon. Thus, each time we take ten steps toward it, utopia walks ten steps away from us. And this happens because the philosophical utopia does not face the future as the inevitable consequence of the present, but rather, as Benoît Timmermans puts it, as a network of possibilities.¹⁷

In order to understand this idea of the future as a network of possibilities, we will have to go back to the concept of *avenir* and reflect further on how it differs from the concept of *futur*.¹⁸ As Gérard Klein clarifies, the notion of *avenir* is a rather recent concept derived mainly from literature. *Futur* refers to what is written, to what is bound to happen; it is unique, as the past is, and is in fact the continuity of the past and the present. Human beings do not know it, but they have certainly tried to predict it. The notion of *avenir* is more complex and larger. It includes everything that may happen, everything that may be invented. By definition, it is multiple and plural. In this sense, it is absolutely unpredictable, as it hosts a myriad of very interesting possibilities. According to Klein, from antiquity to the seventeenth century, *futur* was the only workable notion—people thus tried to guess what eventually would happen in a sort of a prophetic attitude. But when in 1644 Francis Cheynell published *Aulicus his Dream, of the King's Sudden Coming to London*, a six-page text that described an imaginary visit of Charles I to the city of London after the English Revolution to find how it had changed with the abolition of the monarchy, the notion of *avenir* was introduced. The birth of euchronia, which would only really be in fashion after the nineteenth century,¹⁹ signals a new way of thinking about the future—imagining it, inventing it, and, consequently, wishing to contribute to its creation.²⁰ Contemporary utopian thinking is characterized by this attitude. From the perspective of utopian thinking, the future

¹⁷ Benoît Timmermans, "Penser l'Avenir avec Spinoza," in *Les Philosophes et le Futur*, ed. Jean-Noël Missa and Laurence Perbal (Paris: Vrin, 2012), 30.

¹⁸ I am using the words in French as the distinction is not discernible in English.

¹⁹ Euchronia literally means "the time of perfection", and within the context of utopian literature it refers to a "good place in the future". The first euchronia is usually attributed to the French writer Louis-Sébastien Mercier (*L'an 2440: Un rêve s'il en fut jamais* [*Memoirs of the Year Two Thousand Five Hundred*], published in 1771). However, the euchronian logic can already be found in Cheynell's text. It should be pointed out, though, that euchronian literature only became common in the mid-nineteenth century.

²⁰ Gérard Klein, "L'invention de l'avenir," in *Les Philosophes et le Futur*, ed. Jean-Noël Missa and Laurence Perbal (Paris: Vrin, 2012), 255–57.

is not a *futur*, but an *avenir*; it thus has a multiple nature, and can only be described in the plural.

By thinking of the future as a network of possibilities, utopian thinking opposes, against the prophetic attitude that prevailed until the seventeenth century, a *prospective* attitude, and aims at the exploration of a set of possibilities that are intimately linked to each other. In order to understand what is implicit in this attitude, we will have to reflect on the Latin etymology of the word *prospective*. The word derives from the association of the prefix *pro* (forward) with the verb *specere* (look) and the suffix *tivus* (intensity of action). When we think of a prospective attitude, we have in mind the action of looking forward as well as the intensity and the intentionality of that look. While prophecy implies the simple enunciation of a vision (i.e., a static attitude), the prospective attitude implies interest and movement. It implicates the person itself in the vision; it presupposes searching, creation, and novelty, and expresses a wish to go beyond what is known—to enunciate not to what *we will be* (to resort to Deleuze’s argument about time) but what we may become.

However, it is important to understand that these possibilities that we imagine and invent are by no means divorced from reality. As the Swiss educator and philosopher Pierre Furter so often claimed (inspired by Ernst Bloch), utopia only makes sense when it is directed toward the future, when it derives from a reflexive and critical examination of the present and when it gives priority to the psychological dimension of its fulfilment. Utopian thinking implies, from this perspective, the constant questioning of the real, historical *locus*. It is the result of an intelligence that tries to perceive things that are born out of the real but that are in fact beyond the real. In spite of its prospective dimension, utopian thinking is to be applied to the here and now, in the moment and the place where we imagine different futures for humanity.²¹

The way that Furter describes utopia is indeed of paramount importance for understanding contemporary utopian thinking. Moreover, to Furter, utopia does not offer final truths; the truths it offers are the result of the dialectical transformational movement that it establishes with the real world.²² This idea of a dialectical transformational movement cer-

²¹ Pierre Furter, *A Dialética da Esperança: Uma Interpretação do Pensamento Utópico de Ernst Bloch* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1971).

²² Yvonne Soares dos Santos Greis, “O Elemento Utópico no Pensamento de Pierre Furter” (master’s thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1996), 32.

tainly highlights the engaging nature of contemporary utopian thinking, and offers a good argument against those who tend to dismiss the philosophical utopia on the grounds that it has lost connection with the real world. In fact, the philosophical utopia relies on its function to educate *for* desire, which is in fact comparable to the catalytic function that, in Mello Moser's view, More expected *Utopia* to perform. Thus, at the same time as it teaches the reader to hope for change, the philosophical utopia provides different views on a particular subject, and expects the reader to reach his or her own truths.

The catalytic function reveals itself, above all, in the prospective search for solutions. To the Portuguese philosopher Boaventura de Sousa Santos, the most important dimension of utopia—the one to which we really must pay attention if we want to overcome these times of crisis—is precisely this prospective dimension. In the last chapter of *Toward a New Common Sense*, curiously titled “Don’t Shoot the Utopist,” Sousa Santos maintains that the only possible path is that of utopia, or “the exploration, through imagination, of new ways of human possibilities” based on the conviction that we are capable of creating something “radically better for which we are willing to fight, and to which humanity is entitled.”²³ The connection between the utopian imagination and reality is also emphasised by Sousa Santos, who sees its purpose as twofold. For Sousa Santos, utopian thinking highlights what is missing in the present. Furthermore, although it may seem to be distant from reality, utopian thinking resorts to the present in order to imagine new possibilities, and combines what exists in new ways and on new scales, thus taking into the center what used to be on the margins.

In *Brief Notes on Science*, the Portuguese writer Gonçalo M. Tavares describes the idea of scientific progress in a way that, in my view, may help us better understand these ideas. Tavares argues that everything small may be positioned in such a way so as to make it look much bigger—for instance, we simply need to bear in mind the brutal experience of seeing our finger as suddenly bigger than a skyscraper. According to Tavares, scientific progress occurs when someone dares to look at reality in a different way, that is, out of the corner of his eye:

²³ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Tradition* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 479.

Observing out of the corner of one's eye indicates, in science, the commencement of a new hypothesis.

What is observed from the centre of one's eye is the obvious, it is what is shared by the multitude.

In Science, as in the world of inventions, observing out of the corner of one's eye is seeing the detail, it is seeing that which is different and which may be the start of something meaningful.

Observing reality out of the corner of one's eye, i.e.: thinking slightly to the side. From here all of the important scientific theories were born.²⁴

Looking at utopia in the light of these theories means understanding it mostly as a strategy of searching for signs or for possibilities that have yet to be revealed, but which are available to us—we just need to want to look for them in order to find them.

The philosophical utopia that underlies contemporary utopian thinking thus trusts the reader with the most difficult task: confronting a thesis (the real world or the initial proposition) and an antithesis (the alternative utopian vision that works as a reaction to the proposition), the reader is expected to reach a synthesis by reconciling the common truths of both thesis and antithesis to form a new proposition, which may well benefit from the reader's own input—the result of his own looking out of the corner of his eye. But what is most important is that he understands that this is a never-ending process, and that once he proposes a new thesis, it must be opposed by a new antithesis, so that new propositions may be formulated.

Contemporary utopianism has walked away from the political utopia not only in reaction to the attacks perpetrated by anti-utopians, but also as the result of the realization that when utopia is offered as a blueprint or final truth, it is likely to engender dystopia. It now presents itself in the form of the philosophical utopia—as a device to promote critical thinking and a strategy for the search of transitory truths. As we have seen, this research is by no means divorced from reality, as the real world is always taken as the first proposition. But it depends, for its effectiveness, on the reader's willingness to participate in the search. Was Louis Marin right, after all, when he described the desperate circularity of utopian thinking? When applied to contemporary utopian thinking, Marin's diagnosis fails

²⁴ Gonçalo M. Tavares, *Breves Notas sobre Ciência* (Lisboa: Relógio D'Água, 2006), 75; my translation.

because he did not see that the reader is part of the utopian equation, as it is the spiral and not the circle that best represents the dialectical method. Marin was right, though, when he asserted that utopias are not to be realized. That, however, is so only because within the dialectical method the synthesis is always to be taken as a new proposition—a thesis requiring to be challenged in the process of searching for new (transitory) truths.

The philosophical utopia thus presents itself with an unprecedented ambition in assuming that the reader will be capable of critical thinking, and expecting him to contribute toward change. It certainly is a long way from the political utopias offered by “men of genius,” to use Marx’s words, who in the nineteenth century had aimed to contribute to the education of desire by offering very clear visions of the future.²⁵ By setting the reader in the epicenter of utopian thinking, the philosophical utopia embraces the mission of promoting an education *for* desire, and presents utopian thinking as a particular mode of looking at and interacting with reality—a sort of “resistance” and “transformation” of reality from within, as Deleuze and Guattari said of the “utopias of immanence.”²⁶

But will the promotion of this strategy based on the education for critical thinking be enough? In his paper “Critical Pedagogy, Utopia and Political (Dis)engagement,” Darren Webb offers a lucid view on the consequences of this strategy when applied to the field of education. Drawing on the distinction proposed by Levitas between the notions of *utopia-as-system* and *utopia-as-process* (which basically correspond to the notions of the political utopia and the philosophical utopia, respectively),²⁷ Webb proves how the rejection of *utopia-as-system* resulted in limiting the potential for political intervention based on the utopian pedagogy of educators who claim to be influenced by Paulo Freire’s utopian pedagogy but who seem to ignore that Freire believed that the human beings need blueprints to propel them toward a better future.²⁸ Webb successfully describes

²⁵ See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Essays* (New York: International Publishers 1972), 35–36.

²⁶ Deleuze and Guattari describe the utopias as acts of resistance. In their view, these utopias contribute to change and progress by showing new ways of being, living, and sensing the world through the form of virtual becomings.

²⁷ Ruth Levitas, “The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society: Utopia as Method,” in *Utopia Method Vision: The Use Value of Social Dreaming*, ed. Tom Moylan and Raffaella Baccolini (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), 46–68.

²⁸ Darren Web, “Critical Pedagogy, Utopia and Political (Dis)Engagement,” *Power and Education* 5, no. 3 (2013): 280–90. On Paulo Freire’s claim that we need blueprints see *Cultural Action for Freedom*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972).

the shortcomings of an education that is focused only on a future-oriented pedagogy of hope—on the belief that different futures are possible, that utopia is a collective human process, that the present is incomplete, and that our mission is to find what is missing. Although the belief in counter-hegemonic possibilities is no doubt essential, the liberal rejection, *a priori*, of blueprint utopianism has reduced utopian pedagogy to a process of questioning (and transformed the process itself into an end) and emptied utopia of valid guiding images. In an argument that is worth revisiting, Webb concludes that political visions need to be revalidated and offered not as blueprints, but as images that may guide and direct transformative action, which will otherwise run the risk of being entrapped in endlessly open projects. Webb does not stand, however, for a return to utopia-as-system. What he intends to demonstrate is that the distinction between utopia-as-system and utopia-as-process is false, and that “without content and vision utopian spaces run the risk of remaining empty and barren,” thus resulting in what Erik Olssen called “a political paralysis.”²⁹

Although Webb is mainly concerned with pedagogical issues, his conclusions are no doubt applicable to what has been said here about contemporary utopian thinking. The problem of contemporary utopian thinking is that it has invested too much in its function and has neglected its potential contents. By pinning its hopes on the reader and his capacity for critical thinking and the syntheses he may reach, it has neglected to offer idealizations that may guide him in his pursuit of truths. Revisiting Dias de Carvalho’s description of the philosophical utopia, we may say that the ideals have been presented as too vague, the idealizations too elusive and distant. As Galeano has rightly explained, we need utopian horizons because they will inspire us to walk. But if we are not given concrete examples of horizons, the energy of potentially transformative utopian thinking will be lost in an endless search.

We need to rescue the political utopia from the exile that it has been forced into. What is more, the real task that contemporary utopian thinking needs to undertake today is to invest in a dialectical approach to the political utopia (the thesis) and the philosophical utopia (the anti-thesis) that, through reaching a synthesis, may enable us to sustainably overcome the times of crisis in which we currently live.

²⁹ Webb, “Critical Pedagogy,” 287.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloch, Ernst. *The Principle of Hope*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.
- Carvalho, Dias. "From Contemporary Utopias to Contemporaneity as a Utopia." In *Utopia Matters: Theory, Politics, Literature and the Arts*, edited by Fátima Vieira and Marinela Freitas, 63–80. Porto: Editora da Universidade de Porto, 2005.
- Deleuze, Gilles. "Foucault, Historien du present." *Magazine littéraire* 257 (September 1988): <http://libertaire.free.fr/DeleuzeFoucault03.html>.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- "Eduardo Galeano (1940/2015) - El Derecho al Delirio (Legend)." YouTube video, posted by "Enzo de León," July 3, 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-pgHIB8QdQ>
- Freire, Paulo. *Cultural Action for Freedom*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.
- Furter, Pierre. *A Dialética da Esperança: Uma Interpretação do Pensamento Utópico de Ernst Bloch*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1971.
- Greis, Yvone Soares dos Santos. "O Elemento Utópico no Pensamento de Pierre Furter." Master's thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1996.
- Hill, Eugene. "The Place of the Future: Louis Marin and his Utopiques." *Science Fiction Studies* 9 (July 1982): 167–79.
- Klein, Gérard. "L'invention de l'avenir." In *Les Philosophes et le Futur*, edited by Jean-Noel Missa and Laurence Perbal, 255–65. Paris: Vrin, 2012.
- Levitas, Ruth. *The Concept of Utopia*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998.
- . "The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society: Utopia as Method." In *Utopia Method Vision: The Use Value of Social Dreaming*, edited by Tom Moylan and Raffaella Baccolini, 46–68. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007.
- Malraux, Henri. *Convoiter l'Impossible: L'Utopie avec Marx, malgré Marx*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1995.
- Marin, Louis. *Utopics: Spatial Play*. Translated by Robert A. Vollrath. London: Macmillan, 1984.
- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *Selected Essays*. New York: International Publishers, 1972.
- Mercier, Louis-Sébastien. *L'an 2440: Un rêve s'il en fut jamais*. Published in 1771. Translated by W. Hooper as *Memoirs of the year Two Thousand Five Hundred*. 1772.
- Moser, Fernando de Mello. *Tomás More e os Caminhos da Perfeição Humana*. Lisbon: Vega, 1982.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Tradition*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Tavares, Gonçalo M. *Breves Notas sobre Ciência*. Lisboa: Relógio D'Água, 2006.
- Timmermans, Benoît. "Penser l'Avenir avec Spinoza." In *Les Philosophes et le Futur*, edited by Jean-Noel Missa and Laurence Perbal, 29–43. Paris: Vrin, 2012.

- Vieira, Fátima. "The Concept of Utopia." In *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, edited by Gregory Claeys, 3–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Webb, Darren. "Critical Pedagogy, Utopia and Political (Dis)Engagement." *Power and Education* 5, no. 3 (2013): 280–90.

Third Way Utopianism: Anarcho-Democratic and Liberal Socialist Ideas in Central Europe

ANDRÁS BOZÓKI | PROFESSOR, CENTRAL EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST AND

MIKLÓS SÜKÖSD | ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN

In this chapter we examine hybrid political ideas that bridged or even blended allegedly incompatible ideologies and created a new texture. The ideas to be discussed are “anarcho-democracy” and “liberal socialism” in twentieth-century Central Europe. These ideas came close to utopian thinking in that their representative proponents tried to find a non-existent third way between clear-cut models. Instead of hewing to either anarchism or liberal democracy, they tried to figure out a third way solution between the two. Instead of taking sides in the historic debate between liberalism and socialism, they tried to find a new blend, liberal socialism. Therefore it is not unjustified to call them variations of third way, or hybrid, utopianism.¹ Refusing to accept “either/or” solutions, third way thinkers wanted to discover a new road to human paradise that incorporated all the good sides of opposing ideologies and eliminated their negative aspects. In approaching this topic, we suggest that a utopia does not always represent a clear and coherent single idea. On the contrary, a utopian vision might appear as a positive way out of two or more sometimes negative (but often contradicting) perspectives by merging and transcending them.

In the first part of this chapter, we explore the political background and show how some anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist theorists, such as Jenő Henrik Schmitt, Ervin Batthyány, and Ervin Szabó, coped with the

¹ This chapter is partly based on the ideas and historical material that we first discussed in our book, András Bozóki and Miklós Sükösd, *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2006). However, we explore in detail the notion of anarcho-democratic synthesis or hybridity here for the first time.

conceptual and real political challenges of democracy in the region, but in fact resisted the accepted models and did not become anarcho-democrats. In the second part, we ask how it is possible that eminent intellectuals and political leaders like Oszkár Jászi and István Bibó linked anarchy to democracy in their hybrid theoretical syntheses. We also argue that a peculiar Central European dilemma is present here that is related to the elusive nature of political democracy in the region. In this sense, concepts like “liberal socialism,” “quality socialism,” “an-archy,” and even the more contemporary variations of the theme, such as the “power of the powerless,” or “antipolitics,” and other similar intellectual utopias, as we shall elaborate, address the same dilemma.

Three Types of Anarchism and the Central European Dilemma

The various anarchist ideas and movements were confronted with a variety of geographic, historical, and cultural challenges in different parts of Europe.² There were three types of anarchist currents developing on the European continent at the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth century.

In Western Europe, where constitutional monarchies and democratic states (the latter emerging in the last two decades of the nineteenth century) based on a rule of law first came into being, anarchism evolved in opposition to democracy. Anarchism was an expression of disappointment with the unsatisfactory, petty, and obscure developments of democracy that seemed to favor small political groups and capitalist economic elites. This resulted in the appearance of syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism, which wished to implement radical social changes with extra-parliamentary methods, such as by waging economic battles through the strikes of labor unions. In the northwestern European countries, where the collective organizations of the working classes and the Social Democratic parties were strong, anarchism remained weak in the early 20th century. In contrast, in the southwestern European capitalist economies in which the workforce was still divided into smaller units, manufacturing still displayed strong guild-like features and the individual worker still enjoyed greater independence, anarchism made

² Here we distinguish between Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Central Europe. In detail, see Jenő Szűcs, “The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline,” *Acta Historica Acaemiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29, nos. 2–4 (1983): 131–84.

greater inroads than social democracy. Anarchism could evolve structurally where there was nascent democracy and where consequently there was already some disappointment with democracy. In this sense, we may call mainstream European anarchism “post-democratic” anarchism.

The political situation remained fundamentally different in Eastern Europe, including the Ukraine, the European parts of Russia, and the Balkans. Here the attainment of democracy was not a realistic possibility. These predominantly agrarian societies developed little in the way of a socialist labor movement; their peasants and agrarian sectors enjoyed preponderance, and modernization and urbanization reached relatively low levels. In these pre-democratic countries, anarchism appeared to the oppressed masses as a messianic message of salvation and the illusive hope for an ideal, redeeming, and just society. In these societies the state was either identical with tsarist dictatorship or highly associated with the unrestrained activities of a powerful elite that used their control not for the common good, but strictly for their own selfish, mafia-like aggrandizement. Here the revolt was against power and the state, and because the introduction of democracy was not a realistic goal, it seemed that excessive confidence in the possibility of achieving an ideal anarchist society was not unreasonable. Therefore, anarchism was also strong where both democracy and anarchism were equally distant from reality and appeared only on a utopian horizon, as in Russia. In this sense, we may label Eastern European anarchism “pre-democratic anarchism.”

In Central Europe, between these two other European regions, most of the area was taken up by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which featured a dualistic, autocratic system that was constitutional and liberal, but definitely not democratic. Since the late nineteenth century, democracy in Central Europe was perceived by progressive movements and theorists as being always just a few steps away. The majority of the politically aware progressives believed that, with a successful outcome of certain political and franchise battles, democracy would become a reality. In this context of “elusive democracy” in Central Europe, those democratic thinkers who sympathized with anarchy characteristically vacillated between the ideals of democracy and anarchy, and finally arrived at a hybrid solution between the two. They hoped that “true democracy,” a situation in which several principles of anarchy, like the anarchist interpretation of autonomy, could be accommodated. They also melded anarchism with democratic and liberal socialist elements. In examining the historical turning points of Hungarian anarchism, the appearance of a recurrent, multifaceted, and peculiarly Central European dilemma becomes evident.

In Central Europe, achieving democracy seemed only a few steps away and thus offered the opportunity for strong, optimistic expectations. The immediate expectation of democracy made it difficult for both pre-democratic and post-democratic anarchism to gain strength in this region. It is not a coincidence that it was only the religious anarchist peasant movements at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century that were able to mobilize the masses on the basis of anarchist principles in Central Europe. The reason was that this messianic-millennarian movement was as far from democracy as possible. As far as the “anarchist” point of view is concerned, however, the effects of fusion of liberal and socialist elements, which went beyond both the existing democracy in the West and the autocracies in the East, never progressed beyond a small group of intellectuals.

Political thinkers and progressive intellectuals in this region, sympathizing with liberalism, non-authoritarian socialism, and anarchism, endeavored to answer the questions of social change with hybrid theoretical solutions. In essence, all of them, from Jászi and Ervin Szabó to Bibó and György Konrád, and from Václav Havel to Václav Benda and others, imagined a solution that combined the advantages of anarchy and democracy without the disadvantages of either. They wanted the people to come into power but detested power itself.

However, the question of power as a theoretical concept and an empirical reality could not be avoided in Central Europe just as it could not be anywhere else. It had to be confronted, perhaps by democratizing it and dividing it among various groups in society. The one thing that could not be done was ignoring it. Power could not be simply dismissed *a priori*, and something had to be done to make it more human and endurable. In contrast to Russia, this issue was put on the intellectual agenda of progressives in Central Europe. As we mentioned earlier, from this intellectual agenda, such ideas emerged as conversion of the structure of power into “liberal socialism” as proposed by Jászi,³ or László Németh’s “quality socialism.”⁴ Other conversion ideas included Bibó’s “an-archy”⁵ and

³ Oszkár Jászi, *Marxizmus vagy liberális szocializmus* [Marxism or liberal socialism] (1919; Paris: MFK, 1983).

⁴ László Németh, *A minőség forradalma* [The revolution of quality] (Budapest, 1940).

⁵ István Bibó, “Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme” [The meaning of European social evolution], in *Válogatott tanulmányok* [Selected writings], ed. István Vida and Tibor Huszár (Budapest: Magvető, 1986), 7–123.

the idealization of civil society by re-moralizing politics, that is, Havel's "power of the powerless"⁶ and Konrád's direct "antipolitics."⁷

There has been a peculiarly Central European dilemma, a Central European political theory paradigm, from which even very differently oriented thinkers could not disembarass themselves. This was a problem just as much for the *völkisch*-populist thinkers as for the Westernizer-urbanite ones. The question was, how could various external Western and Eastern European influences be melded, and then how could this mixture be made to yield an original variant that would be characteristic and typical of the Central European region? It had to be a variant that went beyond the capitalist alienation and egoist individuality of the West, and the brutality and authoritarian centralization of the East. One of these concepts was the "Garden Hungary" idea of László Németh.⁸ It was a wishful image of a harmonious Hungary based on ordinary people and small enterprise, free of the ones wielding great power. We must also mention Ferenc Erdei's occasionally emerging idea of socialist co-operatives⁹ and the impact of Henry George.¹⁰ Another example is the hybrid ideas and romanticism of the 1956 revolution in Hungary, which was built on workers' councils in factories, ground-level democracy—including revolutionary committees on the streets—and a pluralist party system. Similar hybrid ideas appeared in the basic political and ethical principles of *Solidarność* (Solidarity) in Poland in 1980–81, when the drafters of the movement's program spoke about the necessity of a democratic and ethical republic based on syndicalism-spirited self-governance and Christian-socialist principles.¹¹

In Central Europe practically every antiauthority thinker claimed that the solution was a small community democracy, originating with a com-

⁶ Václav Havel, *The Power of the Powerless* (London: Hutchison, 1985).

⁷ György Konrád, *Antipolitics: An essay* (London: Methuen, 1984).

⁸ Németh, *A minőség forradalma*.

⁹ Ferenc Erdei, *Szövetkezeti írások 1–2* [Writings on the cooperatives], (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1979).

¹⁰ Henry George, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth: The Remedy* (New York, 1879).

¹¹ A few excerpts from their program include, "We demand that, at every level of leadership, a democratic, self-management reform should enable the new economic and social system to combine planning, autonomy and the market" and "Pluralism of social, political and cultural ideas must form the basis of democracy in the self-governed republic." Solidarity Program, *Labor Focus on Eastern Europe* 5, nos. 1–2 (Spring 1982). Translations are made by the authors unless otherwise noted.

mitment to individuals, brotherhood, solidarity, cooperation, collaboration, self-government, and cooperatives rather than to the great formal structures like capitalism, communism, representative democracy, or a global world system. For these thinkers, grassroots, civility, and community meant freedom, sustainability, the creation of a new ethical quality, and the path to national advancement.

Ideal Anarchism, Anarcho-Syndicalism, and Democracy

Among the anarchists of the region, perhaps Jenő Henrik Schmitt (1851–1916), a non-violent, Christian anarchist active in the 1890s and early 1900s in Hungary, is the most interesting anarchist theoretician and movement organizer who equally and simultaneously represented Western and Eastern anarchist approaches. At the beginning, he was a follower of Hegel; later, he combined ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche, Leo Tolstoy, Gnostic Christianity, and anarchism. His invention, “ideal anarchism,” was in many ways Western because he grounded it in his rejection of democracy on a Christian basis and in Christ’s name, even though a democratic system did not even exist in Hungary at the time, and considered it a mendacious domineering system. In this sense he was close to the Western, post-democratic anarchists. He went so far as to remove the word “democratic” from the name of the Independent Socialist Party, a peasant party that embraced his non-violent Christian anarchism at the time of an agrarian socialist movement in 1907. Yet he may also be seen as Eastern, because under the influence of Tolstoy, Gnostic Christianity, and Buddhism, he proclaimed worldly redemption in a language that was more religious than quasi-religious.¹² Some of his students preserved his Christian teachings in a religious sect until the 1960s. In fact, he did not have a practical political program and had no utopian blueprint for a desirable and possible political system. The cult of non-violence bridged the different approaches, because this was understood an equally Western and Eastern concept. Schmitt was probably the only thinker of the Central European paradigm that blended democracy and anarchy while idealizing both. However, even in Schmitt’s ideal anarchism one can already sense the pull of and subsequent

¹² Schmitt’s major books include *Friedrich Nietzsche an der Grenze zweier Weltalter* (Leipzig, 1900); *Graf Leo Tolstoy und seine Bedeutung für unsere Kultur* (Leipzig, 1901); *Die Gnosis I–II.*, (Leipzig, 1903–1907); *Die Kritik der Philosophie von Standpunkte der Erkenntnis* (Leipzig, 1907).

gravitation toward both Western European post-democratic and Eastern European pre-democratic anarchism. Schmitt refused democracy and demanded to establish Christ's kingdom on Earth in an attempt to reach paradise here and now through ethical liberation. Other Central European theorists, however, chose a more mundane path and blended democracy and anarchism in more politically oriented theories.

Ervin Batthyány (1877–1945), the “anarchist Count” active in the first decade of the twentieth century, was a Western-educated personality who shared the Western disillusionment with Social Democracy and originally believed in evolutionary practices like reformed schools, education, enlightenment, and training on the British model. Studying at London and Cambridge universities, he was influenced in this direction by reading such progressive authors as Edward Carpenter, William Morris, Leo Tolstoy, and Peter Kropotkin. In 1904 he set out the anarchist viewpoint at one of the debates of the *Társadalomtudományi Társaság* (Social Science Society) in Budapest concerning the direction of social development. According to his definition, “by anarchism—freedom from rule—we must understand a social order based purely upon the free, fraternal cooperation of the people, with no external power or violence. In place of the system of rule based upon violence, which wins expression in the coercive institutions of property, law and the state, the forms of anarchist society come into existence through the solidarity concealed in human nature and through the freedom, equality and voluntary cooperation that flow from it.”¹³ Batthyány was most receptive to Kropotkin's communist anarchism,¹⁴ besides Morris's “ideal free socialism.”¹⁵

Batthyány also experimented with hybrid solutions, as seen in particular when he wrote an article about socialism and anarchism being two sides of the same coin.¹⁶ He urged that followers of both unite not only tactically but also strategically. Batthyány's goal was the development of the

¹³ Ervin Batthyány, “Anarchizmus” [Anarchism] in *A társadalmi fejlődés iránya* [The direction of social development] (Budapest: Társadalomtudományi Társaság, 1904), 23.

¹⁴ See Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (London: Heinemann, 1902).

¹⁵ A classic work combining utopian socialism and soft science fiction is William Morris's *News From Nowhere* (London, 1890). See also William Morris, *Communism: A Lecture* (London: Fabian Society, 1903). For Morris, see the contribution by Eglantina Rempert in this volume.

¹⁶ Ervin Batthyány, “Szocializmus és anarchizmus” [Socialism and anarchism], *A Jövő*, February 1906.

individual, for he saw the genuine nature of man as being rooted in solidarity, which is limited by theocratic prejudices and power systems based on violence. As his starting point dictated—for it referred to the natural universality of the individual—anarchism became not a historical, but a universal phenomenon, and forms of rule were transitional. He categorized the many currents within social theory into two main, mutually opposing orientations. One strand strove, according to Batthyány, for the maintenance of the consolidated system of society, and included liberalism, conservatism, and Christian socialism. Opposed to these stood socialism and anarchism, which advocated the construction of society on wholly new foundations.

Batthyány considered anarchism's most effective weapon to be the withdrawal of solidarity-based communities from the influence of the state and capitalism. Consciousness of solidarity and the role of the new moral worldview were crucial, for any social-political movement not based on changing the consciousness of the people—all people—would only recreate the theocratic relations of the old society. On the basis of the ethos of solidarity, Batthyány rejected the "efforts of authoritarian socialism," seeing a contradiction between its communitarian final aims and statist government means. Without the socialist worldview, he stressed, the socialist, collectivist production system could be misused by the ruling elite, just as in capitalist and feudal systems. At the same time, Batthyány did not mean to draw a realistic picture of the world under anarchy that should be realized by any means necessary. The anarchist utopia cannot be prescribed in advance or hardened into dogma, for this goes against the essence of anarchism. To fix the details and the means would increase the danger of their realization through coercion and even violence. In a society without rule, associations based upon common inclinations, interests, occupations, or proximity come into being by their own means, without a prior plan. Presenting an optimistic anthropological vision of human beings as inherently goodwilled and selfless if external obstacles are removed, Batthyány argued that anyone who doubts this doubts human nature itself.

Batthyány did not, however, stop at this point. He wanted to mobilize anarchism into a labor movement theory. Initially, for tactical reasons, he did not position himself openly against social democracy. In the programmatic article "Socialism and Anarchism," he emphasized the similarities and points of contact between the two approaches.¹⁷ According to this article, the goals of socialism were the socialization of the means of production, equal

¹⁷ Ibid.

distribution of resources, the cessation of exploitation, and a happy life for all. Anarchism presented the demand for the cessation of traditional rule. More accurately, it demanded “that everyone arrange his/her life according to his/her own wishes, his/her own individual needs and judgement; and that harmony arising from the solidarity, voluntary agreement and association of free individuals replace the rule of law and violence.”¹⁸ Since their final goal, “the happiness of every person,” was the same, Batthyány argued that the two concepts were the two sides of the liberation of humanity: the one from an economic, the other from a political point of view.

Therefore, their paths had to be united. Socialism without anarchism meant “hopeless slavery, the divine right of officialdom to rule”; anarchy without socialism was also inconceivable.¹⁹ Batthyány concluded that there was but one possibility for the development of humankind: the society of “free communism” embracing at once both socialism and anarchism. He saw the embryonic form of this in independent interest organizations based on free agreement among workers. Though the final goal was to be served indirectly by economically strengthening, educating, and supporting the political struggle of the working class, Batthyány maintained that “this is all just a means, a way of preparing for social revolution.” In this conception, oriented as it was toward the final goal, “socialism is not just a precondition of anarchism; rather, anarchism actually embraces socialism within itself.”²⁰

One can regard Batthyány, alongside Ervin Szabó, as the most significant theoretician of anarcho-syndicalism in Hungary. Yet as an anarcho-syndicalist, he also expressed surprisingly moderate and tolerant views on the questions of parliamentarism and democracy. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the universal equal franchise and the secret ballot were major issues on the political agenda in Hungary. In 1905 *Szabadelvű Párt* (the Liberal Party) was defeated after three decades in government. In spectacular fashion, *darabont-kormány* (the so-called “henchman’s government”), that came to power in the political crisis, promised to extend the franchise in its official program. At this time, every political or ideological current was obliged to take a stand in respect of the franchise. Batthyány’s position was as follows: “Though as an anarchist I despise parliamentarism, I wish it from my heart that the universal franchise be introduced

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

at the earliest moment. For so long as it is not introduced, the fight for it pushes all else into the shadows: now the workers see it as a kind of panacea that will cure all their problems; until they get it, they will not see how much it can achieve in truth.”²¹ At this time, Batthyány still considered franchise extension to be acceptable as a transitional program, but he regarded it as only the first step in the struggle for liberation, alongside which “direct action . . . is always necessary.”²² He conceived of democracy as popular rule, and he put the emphasis on the second element of this concept. The majority can oppress the minority just as the minority can oppress the majority—rule or coercion itself does not disappear. There was no place in his conception of democracy for the basic demand for minority protection that can be expected in any modern democracy.

In later years, his belief in the transitional value of democracy also wavered. He wrote to Ervin Szabó in 1910:

In my view, democracy is the last, the best disguised, and thus the strongest bastion of the present ruling system. Regarding the view, which has become widespread in countries like Hungary, according to which where democracy has not yet developed fully it must be established and built up urgently, for this is an unavoidable step toward socialism (or, more precisely, anarchist communism), I consider it to be deeply mistaken and dangerous.²³

Batthyány shifted toward anarcho-syndicalism because it promised to preserve his belief in anarchy defined as a society without rule, and because he also regarded it as compatible with the system of principles behind Kropotkin’s communist anarchism. He also hoped that the anarchist ideology with a syndicalist organizational strategy would thus offer viable and practical mobilization solutions for the masses of workers. Because of considerable differences of view, however, his “cooperation” with social democracy was tactical, and thus transitional. To sum up, both Schmitt and Batthyány represent cases of anarchist theorists who faced the conceptual dilemma between democracy and anarchy, as well as the practical challenge of coping with practical democratic and anarchist demands in

²¹ Ervin Batthyány to Ervin Szabó, 11 October 1905, in *Szabó Ervin levelezése* [Correspondence of Ervin Szabó], vol. 2, ed. György Litván and László Szűcs (Budapest: Magvető, 1977), 223.

²² Ervin Batthyány to Ervin Szabó, 30 October 1905, *ibid.*, 235.

²³ Ervin Batthyány to Ervin Szabó, 28 April 1910, *ibid.*, 769.

everyday politics. In their final convictions, both Schmitt and Batthyány remained on anarchist grounds, and proposed anarchistic (Gnostic Christian anarchist and syndicalist, respectively) arguments.

Liberal Socialism and Anarchism

The idea of liberal socialism as a fusion of the best elements of liberalism and socialism can also be examined here from the viewpoint of anarchist problematics. The ideas of two outstanding and well-known Hungarian political thinkers, Oszkár Jászi (1875–1957) and István Bibó (1911–1979), offer a good case in point. Given their interest in the realization of an anti-authoritarian democracy based on the voluntary cooperation of free associations, we label them and their contemporary “anti-political” followers as “anarcho-democrats,” a term that sounds controversial in itself. The distinctive feature of their theoretical approach lies in its paradoxical, ambivalent, and sometimes controversial understanding of democracy and freedom. They wished for a democratic society but shared a deep suspicion concerning any political power. They might have preferred a “democracy without power,” that is, a free and deeply ethical society that could have equally represented political freedom and freedom from politics.

Jászi’s “liberal socialism” was a hybrid ideology replete with anarchist elements. However, he was not an anarchist, but rather a democrat with liberal socialist principles. At the same time, he did not like crude “majority democracy” and wished to dilute it with liberal, socialist, and anarchist spiritual-intellectual “quality” elements.²⁴ For him the idea of the civic suggested a free individual, a person that could not be manipulated by great power structures and propaganda machines.

Anarchism in Hungary was linked organically to the intellectual life of the turn of the twentieth century. It influenced and was influenced by other political ideologies; in this context, the Social Science Society (1900–1918) and the *Galilei Kör* (Galileo Circle, 1908–1919) became gathering places for all the critical-oppositional currents, from liberalism through anarchism to communism. The theoretical weakness of the Hungarian labor movement may be partly attributed to the fact that social democracy was largely excluded from these circles because of “its pro-

²⁴ Jászi, *Marxizmus vagy liberális szocializmus*.

vincial, unimaginative and often anti-intellectual spirit.”²⁵ Prompted by disillusionment over this social democratic party spirit, Jászi founded the *Országos Polgári Radikális Párt* (National Civic Radical Party) in 1914. The party embraced three ideological strands: civic-radical, Marxist-socialist, and free socialist. In contrast to dogmatic social democracy, the free socialists’ worldview placed intellectual work and the land question—the demand of land distribution from feudalistic landlords to peasants—at center stage. Just as the anarchists, the free socialists advocated “free-cooperation and decentralisation in opposition to the State Socialism of Marxists, and disapproval of their doctrine of the class war.”²⁶

In 1919, following his emigration to Vienna, Jászi systematized the ideology of free socialism in opposition to Marxism and Bolshevism. The orientation analyzed here as liberal socialism was explicitly connected with anarchism in both its mentality and its final goal. In Jászi’s view, the common enemy of the broadly conceived movement characterized by its anarchist mentality was political conservatism, and its membership emerged from various progressive orientations as a counterreaction to the existing conservative regime.²⁷

According to Jászi, anarchism and liberal socialism are conjoined in three areas. First, we can identify an overlap where the latter theory is at its most abstract, in regard to the general mentality and moral orientation of political action. Second, anarchism and socialism share the final goal of a society without rule. Like the anarchists, Jászi stated that “a free corporation of free individuals” could be created.²⁸ Third, they share a common internal construction: “Liberal socialism is anarchistic in more than its ultimate tendencies: the air of individual freedom applies to the intellectual structure of the entire school.”²⁹ Furthermore, Jászi intoned that “liberal socialism does not merely flirt with democracy, but rather takes it to its limits: it seeks to achieve self-determination and self-government for every viable group.”³⁰

²⁵ György Dalos, *A cselekvés szerelmese: Duczynska Ilona élete* [Lover of action: The life of Ilona Duczynska] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1984), 39.

²⁶ Oszkár Jászi, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary* (London: P. S. King and Son, 1924), 23.

²⁷ Jászi, *Marxizmus vagy liberális szocializmus*.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 72.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.

The difference is that in order to attain the final goal, liberal socialism recommends concrete political action in place of anarchism's abstract social theory and direct antistatism. In Jászi's view, the correct path involved (in addition to liberal socialism's cooperative-based socialist economic program) the establishment of self-governing circles built upon broad freedoms guaranteed by the state, and in place of the elimination of power, its division and equalization.

The dilemma between state despotism and revolutions by a minority can be solved only if we progress towards the common ideal state that is embraced by both liberal socialism and liberal anarchism, i.e., towards the greatest possible decentralization, the greatest possible autonomy, the most extensive spontaneous association, except where the monopolistic character of the preliminary natural-technical conditions of the factories force the state to take these over. Liberal socialism does not merely flirt with democracy, but rather takes it to its limits: it seeks to achieve self-determination and self-government for every viable group.³¹

This statement contains the three basic principles of liberal socialism: decentralization, self-government, and association.

Jászi intended to establish a socialist doctrine contrasting with Marxism and Bolshevism. He later wrote of this task:

We must create a new ideology of liberal, cooperative-based, anti-etatist, anti-capitalist socialism. If I could start my life again, I would devote it entirely to this and would strive to create a synthesis of socialism in the line of Fourier, Proudhon, Owen, Dühring, Carey and Oppenheimer, without which the world will become terrible, soulless barracks in which the old surplus value is pocketed by a new and even more contemptible aristocracy—the Red Army, the Red bureaucracy and the secret police.³²

³¹ Ibid., 120.

³² The quotation dates from 1935. János Gyurgyák, "Lehetséges-e liberális szocializmus? Jászi Oszkár ideológiája" [Is liberal socialism possible? The ideology of Oszkár Jászi], afterword to Oszkár Jászi, *A kommunizmus kilátástalansága és a szocializmus reformációja* [The futurelessness of communism and the reform of socialism], ed. János Gyurgyák and Szilárd Kövér (Budapest: Századvég, 1989).

Writing the entry on “Anarchism” in 1930 in the highly respected *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Jászi clarified his views on anarchism. He observed that “anarchism covers so many distinct conceptions and tendencies that it is difficult to reduce them all to a common denominator.”³³ Jászi himself defined anarchism as “an attempt to establish justice (that is, equality and reciprocity) in all human relations by the complete elimination of the state (or by the greatest possible minimization of its activity) and its replacement by an entirely free and spontaneous cooperation among individuals, groups, regions and nations.”³⁴

But what happens if the people do not want to or cannot cooperate and associate for each other’s good? Can capitalism and profit-oriented capitalist enterprise be avoided in any other way than through the central planning that Jászi despised so much in both its fascist and communist forms? In Jászi’s view, “capitalism in its present form is just as unsuited to the resolution of the dilemma of security and freedom as are fascism and Bolshevism.”³⁵ Searching for a way out, Jászi hesitated, emphasizing sometimes market-friendly, other times anticapitalist values. He often wrote that the ideology of the new socialism would be “anti-capitalist”; elsewhere, he wrote that “a non-communist socialism can be conceived only on the basis of the free market, free work and free cooperation.”³⁶

Historical experience shows that the free market brings with it the concentration of capital and capitalist private investment, while the demand for large-scale socialization leads not to social ownership but to state ownership, nationalization, and the over-dominance of the state planning bureaucracy. Thus, the two do not easily go together—their contradiction has proved insoluble at the theoretical level not only for liberal socialism, but in general.

The paradoxical relationship of Jászi’s political theory to anarchism can thus be summed up as follows. Jászi’s rejection of capitalism and totalitarian dictatorship led him toward an optimistic anthropology, a picture

³³ Oszkár Jászi, “Anarchism,” in *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. Edwin R. A. Seligman (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 2:46.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Oszkár Jászi, “Kenyér és szabadság” [Bread and freedom] (speech, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH, May 24, 1939) in Jászi, *A kommunizmus kilátástalansága*, 200.

³⁶ Oszkár Jászi, “A szocializmus egy új megalapozása. Nyereszkes vagy működéses társadalom?” [A new grounding for socialism: A profiteering or a functioning society?], in *ibid.*, 261. Originally published in *Világ*, January 2, 1925.

of humanity emphasizing cooperation among human beings. This depiction of humanity was already in itself identical to that of anarchism. They also shared anti-etatism. In 1925, Jászi wrote an article praising Pierre-Joseph Proudhon as “one of the deepest and most original representatives of scholarly anarchism.”³⁷ He devoted another article to the “glittering and expansive figure” of Mikhail Bakunin, whose “basic idea of the *free organization of free individuals* will proceed victoriously through every hell.”³⁸ Following the chaos of World War I, the Bolshevik victory, and the Treaty of Trianon (which shocked Hungary as the majority of its territory was distributed to other states), Jászi also came close to anarchism’s “social mysticism” with his idea of an intellectual *A Szellem Internacionáléja* (“International of the *Geist*”).³⁹ He later established with the cool head of a sociologist that anarchism was not without emotional and religious elements. But while his liberal socialist conception—like that of the anarchists—was unable to produce an effective economic program, he continued to sympathize with anarchism, especially with its general anti-authoritarian orientation, its final goal of free cooperation, and its conception of personal and collective morality.

It should be noted that Jászi’s thinking regarding the hybrid of anarchistic self-government and the democratic separation of powers was not far from that of his long-standing good friend and colleague, the syndicalist Ervin Szabó (1877–1918). In the early twentieth century before World War I, a period that was extremely fertile for the social sciences and progressive movements in Hungary, both thinkers had a mutual influence upon one another. A tacit division of labor even developed between them, whereby Jászi worked to win over the intellectuals while Szabó sought to persuade the workers to socialist—free socialist or syndicalist—thinking. As early as 1904, Szabó too saw a system of self-government developing a rule-free ‘socialist democracy’ guaranteed by the state.

The institutional guarantees are directed at the greatest possible division and diffusion of power. To allow the concentration of only so much power in the hands of individual people as is absolutely neces-

³⁷ Oszkár Jászi, “P-J. Proudhon feltámadása” [The resurrection of P-J. Proudhon], in *ibid.*, 304. Originally published in *Világ*, January 25, 1925.

³⁸ Oszkár Jászi, “Bakunyin Mihály, az anarchizmus atyja” [Mikhail Bakunin, the father of anarchism], in *ibid.*, 323. Originally published in *Világ*, May 17, 1925.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

sary in the interests of the objective goal; to extend self-government such that everyone can act as their own legislature and executive within the bounds drawn by the goal of social coexistence; to eliminate representation in the legislature as in the executive as far as possible; to seize control and render it effective: these are the objective instruments with which we can prevent the degeneration of democracy into bureaucracy (rule by officials), dictatorship, or mass tyranny.⁴⁰

Though both Jászi's liberal socialism and Szabó's syndicalism opposed the social democratic alternative, for Szabó the unionized workers were the favored subjects of social change through syndicalist action and social revolution. Beyond the division of power, Szabó's "socialist democracy" also included the demand for economic democracy, whose relationship to the choice between "market or planning" remained somewhat unclear.

Democratizing Anarchy: An-archy as True Democracy

The ideas of Jászi concerning an anarchistic, free society of equals without rule as a goal of the anti-totalitarian Left made a great impact on subsequent generations and lived on as the twentieth century progressed. Jászi's hybrid concept is comparable with and in fact quite similar to the ideas of democratic and liberal socialism outlined by István Bibó as well as his ideas about the society without rule—"an-archy," as he put it. Bibó's conception shows marked similarities with Jászi's system of thinking. The basis of community is the recognition of the excruciating deficiency described by Jászi in 1936 in the following terms: "The best minds and the masses both abhor capitalism as they do Bolshevism, but every step 'forwards' is a step towards the dictatorship of the *Planwirtschaft*. No doctrine of free, cooperative, anti-statist socialism has been worked out."⁴¹ This lack of theoretical development prompted the best of the Hungarian

⁴⁰ Ervin Szabó, "Pártfegyelem és egyéni szabadság" [Party discipline and individual freedom] in *Szabó Ervin válogatott írásai* [Selected writings of Ervin Szabó], ed. György Litván (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1958), 183–84.

⁴¹ Oszkár Jászi to Imre Csécsy, 27 June 1936, quoted in Zsuzsanna L. Nagy, "Jászi és a hazai polgári radikálisok kapcsolata a két világháború között" [The link between Jászi and the Hungarian Civic Radicals between the world wars] *Történelmi Szemle* 17, no. 4 (1974): 631–49.

radicals in various historical situations to outline the values of converging liberal socialist ideologies.

Just like in the case of Jászi, the later writings of Bibó come increasingly close to anarchism. Bibó, who started as a “law and order democrat” came by the end of his life to the ideas of a “European liberal socialism” constructed on the principles of “an-archy”. Bibó realized that political power could not be eliminated, but he did not consider it sufficient to democratize political power as the “will of the majority.” For him the true essence of democracy was represented by the dispersal and humanization of power. He envisioned a viable system that held individual freedom in the greatest respect, and in which the slogan of being a democrat equaled “not being afraid.” This meant that in a true democracy, that is in an-archy, the individual did not have to fear the will of the majority. He wanted a democracy that respected the individual’s moral autonomy.⁴²

In his last large political work, on the meaning of European social development, Bibó continued to argue that “the task at hand is not simply to change the rulers, but to eliminate the phenomenon of rule.”⁴³ His enumeration of the mechanisms leading to this is almost identical to Jászi’s: the development of self-governing circles based on a broad system of basic rights and the complete separation of powers. Bibó contended that an-archic democracy is the only system that would allow for the millennium-long Christian demand for non-violence to be fulfilled politically. The whole system of self-government can lead to the “an-archic,” rule-free organization of a highly complex society.

We know by now that the coming modern society is also going to need an extremely complex administrative machinery, supported by computers. The liberation of the common man toward that often mentioned *final state of anarchy* (which is not alien to Marxism, either!) is not going to be realized by making human life more primitive or reducing it to transparent and simple forms. *Dissolving the rule of power or transforming it into something ‘an-archic’ and free of domination* is more likely to come about through a different course: through every one of us wanting such a change, and every one of us striving to transform each function hitherto

⁴² Bibó, “Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme,” 93.

⁴³ Ibid., 64.

viewed as one of power into one of service, both in its organizational form and its moral content. . . . By depicting a feasible way for making the future “*an-archic*” or *domination-free*, we are not projecting a primitive society. On the contrary, we acknowledge its increasing integration and complexity.⁴⁴

In contrast to revolutionary anarchism’s frontal attack on the state and its demand for the elimination of rule with no transitional period, Bibó’s conception of an-archy called for the softening of the state and the separation of its powers. While Bibó’s conception shares with anarchism the final goal of the elimination of rule, anarchism proves to be politically powerless and incapable of formulating a political programme. Bolshevism, because of the coercion of dictatorship, remains unacceptable for him. Bibó saw the path toward the elimination of rule not only to exclude capitalist exploitation (as directed by the socialist element in his ideas), but also to involve the effective use of civil rights (the freedoms of assembly, speech, party foundation, and the press) and their extension within self-governing units. This approach promised rational, secure, and gradual development, as opposed to the messianistic-chiliastic endeavors periodically seen on Europe’s semi-periphery. In this conception, bourgeois and socialist revolutions are two stops in the same process—that of the elimination of privilege based on birth or property.

At the same time, Bibó’s work is not without utopian features. Bibó stressed the common liberating features in the values of liberalism and socialism and their mutually empowering nature. He also wanted simultaneously to satisfy such demands generally thought of as contradictory, such as the broad protection of basic human rights and collectivization, or expert leadership and workers’ self-government. Furthermore, he conceived of their realization as occurring through peaceful, cooperative means and gradual compromise. He did, however, counterbalance his hybrid utopianism. Rather than describing a detailed model state to be built come hell or high water, he marked out a path to guide political action and assist day-to-day tactics and long-term strategies. This approach he also shared with Jászi and the anarchists. They all formulated norms and demands—necessary principles, not classical utopias.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Emphasis added.

Critical Perspectives

The liberal socialism of Jászi and Bibó is, like anarchism, anti-Machiavelian, though while anarchism seeks to dissolve politics in morality, liberal socialism strives for the moralization of politics. In this view, the essence of socialism is collectivization and the formation of agricultural cooperatives, not nationalization or planned farming. Liberal socialism seeks to employ democratic procedures not only in the political, but also in the economic sphere. Thus, in politics there is local self-government, in agriculture the cooperative, and in industry workers' self-management. The program of free collectivization is based upon common ownership as distinct from both state and private ownership, and the operation of the market—whose justification is accepted—is subordinated to this. Jászi's "free corporation of free individuals" is a rejection of both the competitive system of classical capitalism and the "dictatorship over needs" of the impersonal state.⁴⁵ Its anthropological ideal type is neither the individual entrepreneur nor the state official, but is rather the person participating in a collective. The theory builds its educational program upon these principles. It rejects the growth fetishism of modern industrial society, and is also prepared to limit economic efficiency in the interests of social integration based upon solidarity.

If anarchism is not without utopian elements, the same can be said of liberal socialism. It too projects the ideal situation into the future. It hypothesizes that people treat cooperation as valuable in itself and place it ahead of their selfish goals, and that they regard the avoidance of alienation as more important than utilitarianism. On the one hand, the practice of social democratic welfare systems, which sometimes approaches these principles, does not give a convincing example of the compatibility of economic democracy based on cooperation and the logic of the market. It is rather, in essence, a modification of market capitalism, introducing redistribution on the basis of taxation. On the other hand, however, the state socialist economic reforms met with failure precisely where they hoped to bring results, in the marketization of the redistributive sector. Despite every effort to the contrary, the lesson of history is that socialism comes about only under forced development, in centralized structures,

⁴⁵ Cf. Ferenc Fehér, Ágnes Heller, and György Márkus, *Dictatorship Over Needs* (New York: Macmillan, 1983).

often under conditions of war or after it. "Real existing socialism" was always state socialism in the Eastern periphery of Europe. Where efforts were made to establish socialism other than through the strengthening of the party-state, as in the Paris Commune, the Kronstadt Uprising, or the Spanish Revolution, failure came within weeks or months. Attempts to recast socialism from inside also ended in failure. Socialism as a homogenized system was unable to fulfill its historical promise; both economically and politically, it proved a modernizing dead-end. The promise of catching up became the reality of collapse.

The cooperative "third way" of self-management never became an actual social and political system. In the East (as in the Hungarian revolution in 1956 or the Polish Solidarity movement in 1980–81) it failed because of Soviet domination and the lack of political democracy; in the West it remained on the periphery of the profit-based private economy. In the social democratic welfare systems, the bureaucratic state took up the task of reducing social inequalities. If economic democracy broadly understood is not possible, nor is liberal socialism. It is based not on the procedural rules of democracy, but on a substantive conception thereof, one that can ultimately be traced back to the anthropological ideal-type of the "collectivizing person." Thus, liberal socialism, like anarchism, is at root utopian in character, even if it differs from anarchism in many other respects.

History, it seems, has not justified the anarchist program of eliminating the state. Most of the basic operating principles of modern democracies are state-political organizing principles: they seek to express the will of society with the intention of influencing state decision-making. Among the three key modes and procedural systems of democracy, pluralism (organizing within the framework of parliamentary democracy and involving political parties which compete with each other and exist with defined political ideologies and worldviews), corporatism (expressing and building upon the distribution of social structures and professions, as well as differentiating economic interests, whether labor, business, or other), and direct democracy (guaranteeing self-government and self-management, and supporting active participation of citizens through plebiscites and other means), anarchism came closest to the last. However, anarchism and direct democracy (and direct participation) are not identical, for the latter contains an element of rule *vis-à-vis* those opinions that remain in minority. Liberal democratic states therefore utilize organizational principles that are based on human rights. In such systems, the law has not so much a repressive function—as is emphasized

and opposed by the anarchists—but rather acts to ensure and protect the channels of freedom.

The anarchist rationale still survives, not just as a general, functional organizing principle relating to the whole society, but rather in the ideas, procedures, and goals of social communities and in the instruments of direct participation. The new social movements that appeared in the 1970s and adopted single-issue politics brought a renaissance of the grassroots principle, group autonomy, and direct participation. Besides their nonviolent, decentralized, and “grassroots democratic” characters, the alternative movements were also connected to the anarchist tradition in their attacks upon hierarchical, authority-based social structures, which ranged from decision-making monopolies to ingrained prejudices. The same may be said about the Occupy movement and the alter-globalization movements of the twenty-first century that also present anarchistic demands.

Conclusions

In summarizing the link between anarchist social theory and democratic theory, while placing the Hungarian attempts to build a liberal socialist and anarcho-democratic synthesis in the broadest possible theoretical framework, we have argued that anarchism is linked at the political level to direct democracy, but that the two concepts are not identical. Anarchy does not, however, conflict with every interpretation of democracy, as the anarcho-democrats were convinced. The two conflict if we mean majority power by democracy, as in Alexis de Tocqueville’s “tyranny of the majority,” Aristotle’s rule over the propertyless, or Bakunin’s false people’s dictatorship. But anarchy and democracy may coincide if popular rule means the rule of everyone—in other words, the absence of rule and coercion. This notion is tied not to the exclusivity of the direct or representative principles, but rather to continuous social agreement, subject to supervision, in which the elements of democracy complement one another. In complex modern societies, this implies not the complete disappearance of rule and coercion, but rather the mutual balancing of different situations of domination. More precisely, it points to the possibility of balancing rule and coercion in such a way as to disperse power by fine-tuning the balance of power as much as possible in an open-ended process. This arrangement is not closed, not decided upon once and for all. On the contrary, it is continuously perfectable, for it builds upon dynamic, not static,

renewable consensus. In this sense, democracy has been interpreted as nothing other than controlled anarchy.

In this context, anarchism does not carry only an anti-establishment, anti-authoritarian attitude. It is also not only an antidote to the possibility of minority or majority oppression within democratic systems. Instead, anarchy appears as the desired utopian end state of the continuous, ongoing democratization project. But this hybrid anarcho-democratic utopia represents one side of the anarcho-democratic, liberal socialist utopia conceived of by Central European progressive political theorists.

On the other side, the concept of liberal socialism is offered in which freedom is a necessary constitutive element of socialism. Without the essential quality of freedom, collectivist socialism degenerates into coercion and even totalitarianism. Only a liberal socialism may avoid this fate, creating equilibrium and thus melding into the utopian state of anarcho-democracy. In this way, the blend of two hybrid political concepts, anarcho-democracy and liberal socialism, creates a synthesis, a joint political utopia in Central Europe.

In the twentieth century there existed simultaneously an anarchist and a democratic tradition that remained components of political thought even under oppressive regimes. Regardless how theoretically possible and practically realistic the idea of an “anarchy with democracy” may seem, it is a fact that both the democratic oppositions in communist countries under Soviet domination and the more recent alternative globalization movements have entered this theoretical pathfinding spectrum of the international left wing. Many authors in the radical anti-authoritarian tradition have addressed the broadening of political apathy, the decrease of participation in politics, the uniformity of the neoliberal globalizing economy, the shifting of power from voters to economic and political elites and lobbies, the evils of political marketing, and similar social and political problems. “Democratic deficit” has become the political watchword of our age. For the anarcho-democrat and liberal socialist thinkers anarchizing democracy, making democracy more approachable and human may well be the global political task of the future.

The question probed by Jászi and Bibó is not related merely to Central European regional issues. Anarcho-democracy is not simply an anti-communist utopia but, as Bibó put it, really a problem of the “meaning of European social evolution.”⁴⁶ Liberal democracies, without competition since the fall of the Soviet system, have been under pressure for social

⁴⁶ Bibó, “Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme.”

renewal (“another world is possible”⁴⁷) partly because they wished to remain as increasingly “post-democratic”⁴⁸ expert-democracies ruled by a technocratic elite.⁴⁹ Bibó’s questions are European and even global questions that are becoming increasingly timely.

Why should these complex ideas that create a new synthesis or hybrid utopia of what we know of as separate political ideologies originate in Central Europe? The history of Central Europe, after all, is a continuous experiment of melding incompatible social and political structures. This has had numerous negative consequences, including the conflict of formal and informal structures and the inscrutability, haziness, and lack of transparency of governments and their regulations. Yet from the perspective of political theory, there may be positive consequences as well, at least over a longer period of time. These positive consequences might be derived from the thoughts of Jászi, Michael Polányi, Karl Mannheim, Jan Patočka, Bibó, Havel, Konrád, and others, because they may help to find a way through complex and incompatible systems. It may turn out that the world is not homogenous and cannot be homogenized, but rather composed of complex and mutually contradictory systems. In its crises, perhaps the intellectual heritage of the Central European liberal socialist–anarcho-democratic thinkers may provide a handhold.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Professor Iván Szelényi for his thought-provoking, substantial comments on our research project.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Batthyány, Ervin. “Anarchizmus” [Anarchism]. In *A társadalmi fejlődés iránya* [The direction of social development], 23–35. Budapest: Társadalomtudományi Társaság, 1904.
- . “Szocializmus és anarchizmus” [Socialism and anarchism]. *A Jövő*, February 1906.

⁴⁷ Susan George, *Another World Is Possible If . . .* (London: Verso, 2004).

⁴⁸ Colin Crouch, *Post-Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

⁴⁹ Gil Eyal, Iván Szelényi, and Eleanor Townsley, *Making Capitalism without Capitalists: The New Ruling Elites in Eastern Europe* (London: Verso, 1998).

- Bibó, István. "Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme" [The meaning of European social evolution]. In *Válogatott tanulmányok* [Selected writings], edited by István Vida and Tibor Huszár, 7–123. Budapest: Magvető, 1986.
- Bozóki, András and Miklós Sükösd. *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies*. Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2006.
- Crouch, Colin. *Post-Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.
- Dalos, György. *A cselekvés szerelmese: Duczynska Ilona élete* [Lover of action: The life of Ilona Duczynska]. Budapest: Kossuth, 1984.
- Erdei, Ferenc. *Szövetkezeti írások 1–2* [Writings on the cooperatives]. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1979.
- Eyal, Gil, Iván Szelényi, and Eleanor Townsley. *Making Capitalism without Capitalists: The New Ruling Elites in Eastern Europe*. London: Verso, 1998.
- Fehér, Ferenc, Ágnes Heller and György Márkus. *Dictatorship Over Needs*. New York: Macmillan, 1983.
- George, Henry. *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth: The Remedy*. New York, 1879.
- George, Susan. *Another World Is Possible If . . .* London: Verso, 2004.
- Gyurgyák, János. "Lehetséges-e liberális szocializmus? Jászi Oszkár ideológiája" [Is liberal socialism possible? The ideology of Oszkár Jászi]. Afterword to *A kommunizmus kilátástalansága és a szocializmus reformációja* by Oszkár Jászi, 335–40. Edited by János Gyurgyák and Szilárd Kövér. Budapest: Századvég, 1989.
- Havel, Václav. *The Power of the Powerless*. London: Hutchison, 1985.
- Jászi, Oszkár. "Anarchism." In *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, edited by Edwin R. A. Seligman. New York: Macmillan, 1930.
- . "Bakunyin Mihály, az anarchizmus atyja" [Mikhail Bakunin, the father of anarchism]. *Világ*, May 17, 1925.
- . "Kenyér és szabadság" [Bread and freedom]. Speech delivered at Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH, on May 24, 1939. Published in *A kommunizmus kilátástalansága és a szocializmus reformációja*, edited by János Gyurgyák and Szilárd Kövér, 264–72. Budapest: Századvég, 1989.
- . *A kommunizmus kilátástalansága és a szocializmus reformációja* [The futurelessness of communism and the reformation of socialism]. Edited by János Gyurgyák and Szilárd Kövér. Budapest: Századvég, 1989.
- . *Marxizmus vagy liberális szocializmus* [Marxism or liberal socialism]. Paris: MFK, 1983.
- . "P-J. Proudhon feltámadása" [The resurrection of P-J. Proudhon]. *Világ*, January 25, 1925.
- . *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*. London: P. S. King and Son, 1924.
- . "A szocializmus egy új megalapozása. Nyerészkedő vagy működéses társadalom?" [A new grounding for socialism: A profiteering or a functioning society?]. *Világ*, January 2, 1925.
- Konrád, György. *Antipolitics: An essay*. London: Methuen, 1984.
- Kropotkin, Peter. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. London: Heinemann, 1902.
- L. Nagy, Zsuzsanna. "Jászi és a hazai polgári radikálisok kapcsolata a két világ-háború között" [The link between Jászi and the Hungarian Civic Radicals between the world wars]. *Történelmi Szemle* 17, no. 4 (1974): 631–49.
- Morris, William. *Communism: A Lecture*. London: Fabian Society, 1903.

-
- . *News from Nowhere*. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890.
- Németh, László. *A minőség forradalma* [The revolution of quality]. Budapest: Magyar Élet, 1940.
- Schmitt, Jenő Henrik. *Friedrich Nietzsche an der Grenze zweier Weltalter*. Leipzig, 1900.
- . *Die Gnosis I–II.*, Leipzig, 1903–7.
- . *Graf Leo Tolstoi und seine Bedeutung für unsere Kultur*. Leipzig, 1901.
- . *Die Kritik der Philosophie von Standpunkte der Erkenntnis*. Leipzig, 1907.
- “Solidarity Program.” *Labor Focus on Eastern Europe* 5, nos. 1–2 (Spring 1982).
- Szabó, Ervin. “Pártfegyelem és egyéni szabadság” [Party discipline and individual freedom]. In *Szabó Ervin válogatott írásai* [Selected writings of Ervin Szabó], edited by György Litván, 183–84. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1958.
- Szűcs, Jenő. “The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline.” *Acta Historica Acaemiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29, nos. 2–4 (1983): 131–84.

George Orwell, Soviet Studies, and the “Soviet Subjectivity” Debate

DMITRY HALAVACH | PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

One of the most recent and important contributions to Soviet history is that of “Soviet subjectivity” literature. This approach originates in the works of Igal Halfin and Jochen Hellbeck, for both of whom Michel Foucault and post-structuralist theory are major sources of inspiration. Halfin and Hellbeck use the Foucauldian analysis of the creation of subjectivity by power to look at the Stalinist purges in a new way. The self that they write about is not a Cartesian or Kantian self, but rather an intersection of discourses and mechanisms of power. This is a radical version of the linguistic turn in history, and the questions that Halfin and Hellbeck raise are equally radical. What potential for resistance was there in the USSR? What were the limits and peculiarities of the new “Soviet self”? And what were the sources of the uniquely confessional nature of Stalinist terror?

There is a curious literariness in the perception of the Stalinist Soviet Union. The true measure of success of George Orwell’s *1984* is the degree to which it has shaped public thinking about the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. *1984* does not possess that sheer verbal brilliance of work by Vladimir Nabokov or Virginia Woolf. Its strength is in its clarity, force, and precision rather than in its magic with words. As W. H. Auden once said, it is not a novel; it is a study. Just as the reading habits of Victorian and Edwardian Britain shaped the way the Great War was imagined by contemporaries, so Yevgeny Zamyatin, Arthur Koestler, and Orwell exercised a great influence on the image of the Soviet Union.¹ Their writings

¹ See Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

did not simply draw on the Soviet experience; they also shaped the way this experience is perceived. The Soviet experiment seems to embody the ultimate dystopian nightmare: the destruction of liberal subjectivity. *1984* fits with this fear perfectly. In fact, the working title of the novel was *The Last Man in Europe*. According to Anna Krylova, “the liberal notion of subjectivity was the unvoiced paradigm in Soviet studies,” and the inhabitants of the Soviet Union, from the viewpoint of the totalitarian school, were an assembly of characters from *1984*—brainwashed nonpersons and party hacks to cynical, self-interested individuals and crypto-liberals *à la* Winston Smith.² Both *1984* and the Soviet subjectivity literature can be construed as a Foucauldian exploration of the capacity of power to create (and destroy) subjectivity. The ambition of this paper is to read Orwell with the help of Soviet subjectivity literature and conversely to use Orwell to read the Soviet subjectivity literature.

Soviet subjectivity literature is a product of its own time, politics, and institutional setting. The concept is being created at a time when the Cold War is over and there is no longer a perceived need to produce passionate defenses of liberalism in the face of a communist threat. Seen in these terms, the totalitarian model and revisionist scholarship appear equally obsolete in the historiography of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, new categories, theories, and models originating in literary criticism, anthropology, and post-structuralist theory have invaded historical scholarship. Politically, this new literature is not far away from the tradition of “fellow-travellers” who generally take a more sympathetic view of the Soviet Union than those of the discipline on the average, let alone the émigré scholars. Institutionally, it is a product of Western academia and its practices of producing knowledge. One of the reviewers of the Soviet subjectivity literature charged it with being an artifact of “publish or perish” policy.³ While this is an unnecessarily harsh opinion, there is a very important point to keep in mind: “discovering” new forms of subjectivity is much more exciting than concluding at the end of years of archival research that early Soviet subjects were not that different after all. Whatever the motives for the reconstruction of this difference are, the notion of Soviet subjectivity being somehow different from the Western liberal one is open to the charge of orientalism. A light version of orientalism is very

² Anna Krylova, “The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Soviet History* 1 (2000): 119.

³ Svetlana Boym, “How is the Soviet Subjectivity Made?,” *Ab Imperio* 9 (2002): 286.

much alive in Russian and Soviet studies, although it is not as obvious as in scholarship on the "Orient" proper due to the ambiguous position of Russia in that civilizational classification. Being a product of particular time and place is not a refutation of the ideas of this literature. A peculiar position of categorization is characteristic to all scholarship. It is simply because Soviet subjectivity field is novel, important, and promising that its limitations have to be understood clearly.

Although Soviet subjectivity literature transcends the totalitarian-revisionist division, it seems to take some insights of the totalitarian model seriously. Of course, the "T-word" is long out of fashion in Soviet studies. Revisionist and post-revisionist scholars have rightly made the history of the Soviet Union more sophisticated. After Foucault, it is difficult to conceive of power as emanating from the center of the state apparatus that faces passive individuals in an atomized society, as Zbigniew Brzezinski and Carl Friedrich believed.⁴ The Soviet subjectivity debate, however takes the sophistication of the field to a whole new level. This line of inquiry seeks to retain and develop the valuable insights of earlier scholarship, including the totalitarian model, while getting rid of dated assumptions and simplifications. Soviet subjectivity literature builds on the insights of Stephen Kotkin and his exploration of the internalization of the discourse of power.⁵ The workers of Magnitogorsk, an industrial center in the Urals, Kotkin argues, defined themselves through the categories of the official discourse. To use his celebrated phrase, they were "speaking Bolshevik." Halfin and Hellbeck take this line of inquiry in a different direction. For one thing, they take language even more seriously and treat all motivations as linguistic. For another, they conceive of Soviet subjects as active producers and participants in producing and sustaining the discourses of power. Their delimitation from Kotkin is in their attempt to problematize the Stalinist subject. What Kotkin sees as the self-interested adoption of the Bolshevik language by pre-existing subjects, Halfin and Hellbeck see as a construction of subjects through discourse.⁶ Despite their common focus on a language-power nexus, the two approaches are very different.

⁴ See Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956).

⁵ See Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁶ Igal Halfin and Jochen Hellbeck, "Rethinking the Stalinist Subject: Stephen Kotkin's 'Magnetic Mountain' and the State of Soviet Historical Studies," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 44, no. 3 (1996): 456–63. doi: 10.2307/41052991.

Halfin analyzes the terror and confessions in eschatological terms. He writes that “the final showdown between the exploiters and the exploited, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, corresponded the Judeo-Christian belief in a final battle between Christ and Antichrist in the concluding epoch of history.”⁷ Coincidence was absent from this vision: everything happened for a reason and because of someone’s actions. The radical tradition of the Russian intelligentsia and the functional and genetic similarity of Marxism to Christian eschatology gave the Stalinist terror its peculiar character. Victims and perpetrators shared the same discourse, Halfin argues. Both Hannah Arendt and Halfin consider that in the eyes of the Bolsheviks, the party had monopolized the truth: there was no way to be right outside of the party. “Truth” consisted of what was required to be accepted as a member of the community. The Bolsheviks, as Arendt and Halfin would have it, replaced objectivity with solidarity.

Diary writing is a quintessential way of gaining access to one’s personality, and it is at the center of Jochen Hellbeck’s work.⁸ Diary is usually construed as a repository of private concerns, passions, and reflections. The enforced collectivism of life in the Soviet Union seems to be inhospitable to the art of diary writing, especially given the significant security risk involved in the process. However, Hellbeck challenges this view in his study of narratives reflecting personal identity in Stalin-era diaries. In 1984, Winston Smith is aware that writing a diary, although not prohibited by law, is “reasonably certain” to result in execution or imprisonment. Following a similar logic, it was believed that the Stalin era featured a decline of traditional diary writing as practiced by the *fin-de-siècle* Russian intelligentsia. Hellbeck and Halfin challenge this by showing that practices of the Soviet regime were aimed at transforming personalities, at constructing a new Soviet Man and Woman. On the one hand, diary writing was actually encouraged as a means to document and speed up personal transformation. On the other hand, diaries were sought by the NKVD as an ideal way to incriminate the victims of terror. Nevertheless, the chief suggestion of proponents of the notion of Soviet subjectivity is that the Stalinist Soviet Union sought to create new forms of subjectivity. This new Soviet subjectivity erased boundaries between public and private. In a curious reversion to the ancient Greek ideal of active public life, it affirmed the public sphere

⁷ Igal Halfin, *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 52.

⁸ See Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary Under Stalin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

and the collective as the only domain in which it was possible to achieve true happiness and true self-realization. Identification of the self with the progressive march of history, being “useful” to society, and the rationalization of body and mind were the most important motifs of the construction of new forms of selfhood. This new identity was forged in conscious opposition to the old soul-searching Russian intellectual tradition and to “decadent” liberal individualism. It shared, however, some features with the earlier examples of the genre. Just as seventeenth-century Swiss or German Protestant zealots searched for the “work of God” and for signs of predestination in their lives, diarists analyzed by Hellbeck were obsessed with being “truly proletarian” and marching in step with the rest of the Soviet collective into the radiant future. One of Hellbeck’s diarists, Stepan Podlubny—a geologist, Komsomol activist, and son of a *kulak*—exhibits a truly Orwellian obsession with self-control and a constant anxiety that his non-proletarian origins will betray him through a careless word, glance, or gesture.

Although he focuses on diaries, Hellbeck is skeptical about experience as an analytical category, because it presupposes the existence of an internal, personal, and unarticulated subjectivity as opposed to a subjectivity that manifests itself in action and in the discourse of power. Experience, understood as the result of a personal perspective on the world, or the individuality of perception, thought, and feeling, is indeed alien to the post-structuralist methodology of Hellbeck. If the subject is just an intersection of public discourses of power, where could this private subjectivity come from?

Most importantly, Hellbeck and Halfin argue that the Soviet project produced a new *modern* form of subjectivity as an alternative to that of Western modernity. Yet it is not at all clear how “modern” this project was. Alexander Etkind and Svetlana Boym, in particular, are skeptical about it. According to Etkind, the results of the Soviet project were “decidedly anti-modern.”⁹ Other features of Soviet society were anti-modern, if not archaic: the role of informal personal networks, hierarchies, nepotism, military drills and exercises in all spheres of life, repression of freedom of speech, and subsistence agriculture practiced by a large share of the population, including the intelligentsia. At the same time, Etkind argues that some of the Soviet regime institutions—natural science institutes and the military-industrial sector, for example—were indeed modern.

⁹ Alexander Etkind, “Soviet Subjectivity: Torture for the Sake of Salvation,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6 (2005): 174.

The Bolsheviks set out in earnest to produce a new “better edition of mankind.”¹⁰ Concentration camps were conceived of as a way to isolate and transform enemies of the new order. But it is important to remember that the project failed. A “new man” (and woman) did emerge, but it was hardly a new and better edition of humanity. After the upheavals of the first five-year plans, the working class descended into a cynical existence, as expressed by the aphorism, “they pretend to pay us, and we pretend to work.” The scholars of the Soviet Union seem to credit the Bolsheviks with too much success in their utopian quest for the transformation of humanity.

The early Soviet subjects studied by Halfin and Hellbeck developed their own authentic voices. However, they were not autonomous, not even in their private sphere. On the contrary, they rejected personal autonomy as a bourgeois illusion, a sentiment echoed by Walter Benjamin when he wrote in his diary that the Bolsheviks had abolished the private sphere altogether.¹¹ Although this statement was obviously an exaggeration, the rejection of the personal sphere as a legitimate field of self-realization was emphatic. Spontaneity was a contentious issue: while some early revolutionary zealots dreamed of an efficient Zamyatin-style man-machine without emotions, the 1930s saw a revival of revolutionary romanticism emphasizing a unity of heart and mind, of emotion and reason. Overall, these early Soviet citizens analyzed by Hellbeck and Halfin asserted their subjectivity through active association with the revolution and the party, not through a complete rejection of the system as Orwell and adherents of the totalitarian school would have us believe. The first entry in the diary need not be “down with Big Brother” for it to qualify as a manifestation of subjectivity. However, the sheer number of clichés in some of the texts is stunning. Consider the following passage, cited by Hellbeck as an example of the structuring of a personal narrative in terms of class struggle:

“There were many victories and defeats. The class enemy, the kulak, did not sleep, organizing the backward mass of poor peasants [*bedniaki*] and peasants of average means [*seredniaki*] against the kolkhozes. Thus, in a bitter skirmish with the obsolete and dying elements, our kolkhozes have been born, reared and strengthened. A lot of struggle still lies ahead,

¹⁰ See Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (London: Faber & Faber, 1937).

¹¹ See Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diary*, ed. Gary Smith, trans. Richard Sieburth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

especially at the new location, the Pirogov village soviet, where I have been transferred by the *raikom* [regional committee] of the Party.”¹²

Using the Bolshevik parlance and “speaking Bolshevik” as a marker of political loyalty and belonging to the party was quite common, but even with this background this passage is remarkable. It is almost entirely made of clichés, as Svetlana Boym points out in her review of Hellbeck’s book.¹³ It might be a manifestation of subjectivity, but it is definitely not a manifestation of individuality. Furthermore, the collectivization campaign with which the passage deals was a brutal and violent affair. The political language of clichés serves here as a means to domesticate the radical evil and to explain away doubts and concern about glaring injustice and inefficiency of collectivization. It is functionally similar to the use of clichés and aphorism-like platitudes by Adolf Eichmann, as described by Hannah Arendt.¹⁴ It is even more similar to the Orwellian use of anodyne words to cover up ugly realities—for instance, “pacification” or “collateral damage” instead of “killing unarmed civilians.”

No amount of reconstructing the “webs of meaning” spun by historical actors can grasp true reality, especially given the self-serving character of many of these narratives. There exists knowledge about society beyond a mere reconstruction of meanings. Besides, should we really analyze cannibals on cannibals’ terms? Here is what Auden has to say about another Soviet narrative, this time about the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968:

*The Ogre does what ogres can,
Deeds quite impossible for Man,
But one prize is beyond his reach,
The Ogre cannot master Speech:
About a subjugated plain,
Among its desperate and slain,
The Ogre stalks with hands on hips,
While drivel gushes from his lips.*¹⁵

¹² Jochen Hellbeck, “Working, Struggling, Becoming: Stalin-Era Autobiographical Texts,” in *Language and Revolution: Making Modern Political Identities*, ed. Igal Halfin (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 118.

¹³ Boym, “How is the Soviet Subjectivity Made?,” 285–96.

¹⁴ See Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press, 1963).

¹⁵ W. H. Auden. *Selected Poems* (Vintage, 1979), 291.

To allow the Soviet communists to speak in their own terms is to conflate the language of practice for the language of analysis. More alarmingly, it would be a capitulation to the language of violence and that “drivel” that Auden writes about. On the other hand, to refuse violence the right to speak in its own language is, ultimately, to deny the existence of evil. There is a long-standing Western tradition that conceives of evil as the absence of good, and darkness as the absence of light. Explanations of Stalinist terror walk a tightrope between a refusal to acknowledge the subjectivity of evil and an uncritical appropriation of language of violence. Moreover, a refusal to take the language of Stalinist confessions and diaries seriously would also mean a resurrection of the ahistorical notion of liberal subjectivity—an idea that one can be a person only outside of the Soviet system and exercise agency only in opposition to it.

The major flaw in the evaluation of Soviet subjectivity literature is that the sample is not representative. It includes sources produced by a tiny number of individuals, most of whom were committed communists. The very act of writing a diary makes for a very peculiar pre-selection process. Furthermore, the diaries that have survived are more likely to be orthodox communist writings, simply because potentially incriminating materials were often destroyed by the authors. As for the confessions, they originate from very specific circumstances, namely, from interrogations under torture. Similar problems are always present in the work of an historian. Nevertheless, a few objections remain. A less sophisticated common-sense approach would suggest that a confession obtained under torture is a dubious source. What does it tell us about the self? For Halfin and Hellbeck, this independent self does not exist; only the subjectivity produced through the workings of power do. There is no difference between the narrated and narrating self. They refuse to search for a liberal (or cynical) subject that can hide under the trappings of the Soviet confessional discourse. Methodologically, this is an extremely difficult problem. Is a declaration of loyalty to the party by a person who is about to be executed a purely instrumental manipulation of the official discourse, or is it a manifestation of that person's true subjectivity? Indiscriminate ascription of liberal subjectivity is unwarranted, but so is the ascription of the Soviet subjectivity. Historicizing this subjectivity is a possibility, not a necessity. Admittedly, Hellbeck and Halfin do not try to extrapolate their findings to the whole society. Nevertheless, they focus on the diaries and personal narratives of the individuals who actively embraced a new order and sought to reconstruct themselves in the image of the Soviet new man. Narratives of the opponents of the regime, of those left behind by the upheavals of

the first five-year plans and the construction of this "brave new world" are mentioned but largely ignored. A voice of the proverbial toad beneath the harrow is silenced in the research of the Soviet subjectivity. This is a "victor's history" at its worst: it succumbs to the language of the "victors" long after they have lost their status as such—a serious limitation of this new historiography. It has moved Soviet history beyond Orwellian simplicities of the totalitarian school and beyond the revisionist neglect of ideology, but it nonetheless presents a skewed picture of life and identity in the Soviet Union. Moreover, it is inappropriate to compare revolutionary diarists' aspirations to transcend the limits of old humanity with existing liberal subjectivity. The former remained a failed project; the latter really exists, as Etkind claims.¹⁶

Before the work of Kotkin and the Soviet subjectivity debate, the quest to unearth traces of resistance to the totalitarian regime assumed the form of a search for liberal subjectivity, or at least its remnants. Orwell's Winston Smith is an excellent example of this resurrection of personhood. Winston reasserts himself against the hegemony of the party that controls all spheres of life. He seeks to establish his personal realm of freedom, even if only through a rebellion inside his mind seconds before execution.¹⁷ This binary conception of private and public is widespread in thinking about resistance under Stalinism. The resurrection of personality is conflated with opposition to the regime: only radical opposition to the party can be an expression of a liberal self. A possibility of a position in-between or the realization of the self through active association with the regime was largely neglected by the totalitarian school. Orwell rejects this possibility outright, it seems. Parsons, a fervent, albeit stupid, patriot of Oceania, ends up in the prison of the Ministry of Love all the same. Syme, a brilliant linguist and a Newspeak enthusiast, is "vaporized." O'Brien has only a last name and symbolizes a completely public individual. Winston Smith, on the contrary, is a combination of private and public (and of upper and working class backgrounds, as the combination of his last and first name suggests). Comrade Ogilvy, the totalitarian ideal and model citizen of Oceania, is doubly non-existent; in the world of the novel, he is a figment of Winston's imagination. Unlike Syme, or even Parsons, Ogilvy lacks all human traits except for a fanatical devotion to the party. His life, described in a satirical tenor, is consummated in a heroic end. This model

¹⁶ Etkind, "Soviet Subjectivity," 185.

¹⁷ George Orwell. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1949), 282.

citizen obtains a subjectivity and self-realization only through death, the ultimate sacrifice to the beloved Oceania. His death serves as a signifier of an otherwise empty and meaningless existence. Only through death can he become a true hero, a true model. This total incompleteness, and not just an absence of emotion or a comical single-mindedness, makes Ogilvy what he is—a non-person, a parody of wartime propaganda.

The depiction of proles in *1984* is an excellent example of the love-hate relationship of British left-leaning intellectuals with the working class. “If there is a hope, it lies in the proles,” writes Winston in his diary, yet, he is painfully aware that the “proles will not rebel in a thousand years.”¹⁸ At times, they seem almost subhuman, and, indeed, the party slogan goes “proles and animals are free.” The inability of the protagonist of the novel to communicate with an old prole who might remember life before the revolution is both comical and tragic. It could very well be rooted in Orwell’s own frustrated attempts to “go native” while living among the working class. Orwell explored the English industrial slums during the depression of the 1930s and saw the appalling misery and poverty of the working class first hand.¹⁹ It also resonates with the disappointment of the socialist intellectuals in the political passivity of the twentieth-century proletariat, which stubbornly refused to play the role of the harbinger of the revolution allotted to it by the Marxist doctrine. The same issue haunts the scholarship of the Soviet working class. Why did they not resist? The proles of the novel are submerged in thousands of petty concerns, in everyday routine and the struggle for survival. They can never see through the shabbiness of everyday existence and discern the real cause of their misery—the hegemony of the party. Instead, they devise cunning schemes to win a lottery (with largely imaginary prizes) and fight each other while queuing for kitchen utensils. Remarkably, historians of the revisionist school have put forward a similar explanation of the stability of the Soviet order. If earlier scholarship presented the Soviet Union as an ideologically driven utopia, revisionist scholarship has focused on social history and everyday life demonstrating the rootedness of the Soviet regime in society and unearthing signs of mass support for the regime.²⁰ If the totalitarian

¹⁸ Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 90–91.

¹⁹ See George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London: V. Gollancz Ltd., 1937).

²⁰ See, for instance, Vera Dunham, *In Stalin’s Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928–1931* (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1978).

school puts forward the concentration camp as the most accurate representation of Soviet socialism, for revisionists it was the queue in a grocery store, as Alexander Etkind writes. Once again, Orwell's fiction resonates and interacts with the actual historiography of the Soviet Union. However, the reason for this resonance might be simply that both revisionists and Orwell were inspired by Trotsky's rendering of Stalinism in *The Revolution Betrayed*. Trotsky served as a model for Oceania's archenemy Immanuel Goldstein. O'Brien admits that Goldstein's analysis of totalitarianism is an accurate description, and Orwell subscribed to an essentially Trotskyist vision of the Russian Revolution in his parable *Animal Farm*.²¹

Personhood was understood by both Orwell and the totalitarian school as a liberal subjectivity based on personal autonomy and the ability to exercise decision-making over the course of one's life. Personal identity involves the continuity of bodily experiences and memory (recall Peter Singer's view of self-awareness in time as the most important feature of conscious beings).²² Spontaneity and emotional diversity are crucial as well. One of the prime Orwellian fears, the malleability of the past, is even more significant because of the central role memory plays in the formation of personal identity. Manipulation of the past is bad in itself; what makes it even worse is the subversion of subjectivity and personal identity that stems from this manipulation. Winston's quest for reasserting his personality involves the search for traces of the past, for the life before the party—a paperweight, a nursery rhyme, the beautifully crafted book in which he keeps his diary, his childhood memories, and an old prole who could remember how life used to be. The destruction of the past and the forgetting of this process through Doublethink contribute to the impossibility of subjectivity in Oceania. Spontaneity is also suspect. Walking around the city without good reason is dangerous. "The birds sang, proles sang. The Party did not sing," observes Winston.²³ A complete regimentation of life in which even physical exercises are directed through telescreen is a rule in Orwell's world. Scientific innovation has largely stopped and the only area where some form of intellectual creativity thrives is weapons and surveillance research. All emotions are reduced to one: fear. Privacy is dangerous. "Ownlife," as it is called in Newspeak, is considered a deviance.

²¹ See George Orwell, *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1945).

²² See Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

²³ Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 278.

For Orwell, the destruction of subjectivity is connected with the destruction of objectivity. The idea that there is an external reality independent of the observer is for him a sufficient ground for resistance, even when in a “minority of one.” The malleability of the past and the modification of the present at the whim of political leaders are two sides of the same coin. It is the existence of independent facts that allows Winston to see through the party’s manipulations and recognize them for the frauds that they are. The standard of that “objectivity” is not very high. Clemenceau allegedly said that whatever future historians will write about the Great War, they will not write that Belgium attacked Germany. The citation may be apocryphal, but it seems that Orwell had this kind of objectivity in mind rather than the view that reality is completely knowable and that we can reconstruct history *wie es eigentlich gewesen* (how it really was), once and for all. He was concerned with the possibility that totalitarianism could abolish the objective truth as such. The connection between this negation of reality and the destruction of liberal subjectivity is crucial to Orwell’s understanding of the human nature. For him, being definitely conditions and influences consciousness. His writings on poverty in British industrial areas, the account of his days in Burma, autobiographical *Down and Out in Paris and London*, and essays on nature all testify to the way that Orwell sees human beings as creatures immersed and shaped by their environment. In the novel itself, Winston recalls the madness of the two minutes of hate, when he ceases to be himself, and is completely altered in the end by torture and interrogation. “Materialist” is a loaded term, but there is something of that tradition in the way that Orwell understands human nature. Hence, the impossibility of independent reality means the impossibility of independent subjectivity. The destruction of liberal subjectivity and the abolition of the concept of the objective truth are intertwined. As James Conant persuasively argues, the attempt made by Rorty to enlist Orwell into his variety of liberalism rests on a misreading of the novel. While Rorty’s denunciation of cruelty can be found in the novel, the idea that “solidarity should replace objectivity” is the philosophy of O’Brien rather than Orwell.²⁴ This is precisely what is so disturbing about the O’Brien utterings in the novel—the idea that there is no knowledge outside of the exercise of power, no external reality against which to

²⁴ James Conant, “Rorty and Orwell on Truth,” in *On Nineteen Eighty-Four: Orwell and Our Future*, ed. Abbott Gleason, Jack L. Goldsmith, and Martha Nussbaum (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 87.

measure the actions and crimes of the party. The realist reading of the novel that Rorty criticizes seems to be more accurate.

The inexplicable randomness, scope, and brutality of Stalinist terror continue to baffle scholars. Arendt described the Nazis as "radical evil" in the *Origins of Totalitarianism* (a concept overshadowed by her more famous idea of the "banality of evil" developed in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*).²⁵ This description also fits the Stalinist terror (of course, without implying that the Soviet and Nazi regimes were identical). Language and reason are pushed to their limits when dealing with the radical alterity of such violence. For all its crudities and simplifications, the totalitarian model captures this aspect well. Arendt writes that the many practices of totalitarian regimes are non-utilitarian, and that the "supreme disregard for immediate consequences" is the hallmark of the totalitarians in power.²⁶ Utopia and dystopia, then, serve as cognitive tools to evaluate this radical difference. In Soviet studies, literary dystopian imagination makes the unthinkable intelligible. This move, however, involves a loss of that sense of radical otherness. Perhaps the loss is inevitable, but a historian should at least be aware of it. The alternative is mysticism, and an inadequate explanation and partial understanding are preferable to none at all. What cannot be spoken of should at least be hinted at.

Overall, the number of parallels between the world of *1984* and the Stalinist USSR is uncanny: the destruction of liberal subjectivity, torture for the sake of salvation, fantasies of plots and subversions, the dissolution of family loyalties, the manipulation of the past, the construction of the utopian body through state-directed physical exercise, the domestication of evil through clichés of political language, the disdain of private life, political terror, and omnipresent propaganda are all present. However, a widespread application of Orwellian language and imagery in describing the Soviet Union has blurred one extremely important distinction. *1984* ends in complete despair: the last man in Europe has been transformed. The Soviet project, on the other hand, was precisely that—a *project*. Still, the Soviet subjectivity school allows for a different and intriguing reading of the novel. What is being destroyed is not subjectivity per se, but rather its liberal variant. The relations in the Orwell-totalitarian paradigm-Soviet subjectivity triangle are, of course, more

²⁵ Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (London, New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co, 1973), 443.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 417.

complex than that, and the perceived insightfulness of the novel might be due to the fact that our own perception of the Soviet Union had been shaped by it. Orwell's work is not a prophecy or a description, but rather an exploration of what Michael Gordin, Hellen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash call the "conditions of historical possibility."²⁷ Orwell's novel has been a sublime source of inspiration for the scholars of Soviet Union, but it can be rather misleading if categories of fiction are uncritically applied to an actually existing society. The distinction might seem old-fashioned, but *1984* is, after all, a work of fiction.

Soviet subjectivity literature is an example of post-structuralist theory applied to the Soviet Union. It is also an example of the utopian (or dystopian) imagination. As such, both the strengths and weaknesses of this approach are highlighted. It demonstrates the otherness of the Soviet self, even if this new form of subjectivity was not universal for all Soviet people. The Soviet utopian remaking of the world also envisaged the transformation of the self. The "reformation" of the last man in the world is also a central topic in *1984*. But there is a distinction here. For Orwell and for Winston Smith, there is a reality outside of the text, a subjectivity outside confession, and an objective truth outside of forms of life. For Haffin and Hellbeck (and for O'Brien), these things do not exist. This, I submit, is the most disturbing aspect of this new literature. It is unsettling to think that O'Brien's point of view might be accepted as more accurate than that of Winston Smith and the critique of Soviet subjectivity as a concept must be led by this sentiment. Whether this normative commitment to humanism belongs in the writing of history is a different question, a question that everyone has to answer for themselves.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arendt, Hannah. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York: Viking Press, 1963.
- . *Origins of Totalitarianism*. London and New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1973.
- Auden, Wystan Hugh. *Selected Poems*. London: Vintage, 1979.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Moscow Diary*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986.
- Bloom, Harold. *George Orwell's 1984*. New York: Chelsea House, 1987.

²⁷ Michael D. Gordon, Helen L. Tilley, and Gyan Prakash, *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 2.

- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Boym, Svetlana. "How is the Soviet Subjectivity Made?" *Ab Imperio* 9 (2002): 285–96.
- Conant, James. "Rorty and Orwell on Truth." In *On Nineteen Eighty-Four: Orwell and Our Future*, edited by Abbott Gleason et al., 86–111. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Dunham, Vera Sandomirsky. In *Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Etkind, Alexander. "Soviet Subjectivity: Torture for the Sake of Salvation." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6 (2005): 171–86.
- Fitzpatrick, Sheila, ed. *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928–1932*. Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1978.
- Friedrich, Carl J., and Zbigniew Brzezinski. *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956.
- Fussell, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Gleason, Abbott, Jack Goldsmith, and Martha C. Nussbaum, eds. *On Nineteen Eighty-Four: Orwell and our Future*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Gordin, Michael D., Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash, eds. *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Halfin, Igal. *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000.
- . *Terror in my Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Halfin, Igal and Jochen Hellbeck. "Rethinking the Stalinist Subject: Stephen Kotkin's 'Magnetic Mountain' and the State of Soviet Historical Studies." *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 44, no. 3 (1996): 456–63.
- Hellbeck, Jochen. *Revolution on my Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- . "Working, Struggling, Becoming. Stalin-Era Autobiographical Texts." In *Language and Revolution: Making Modern Political Identities*, edited by Igal Halfin, 114–36. London: Frank Cass, 2002.
- Kotkin, Stephen. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Krylova, Anna. "The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Soviet History* 1 (2000): 119–46.
- Orwell, George. *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1945.
- . *Homage to Catalonia*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1938.
- . *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1949.
- . *The Road to Wigan Pier*. London: V. Gollancz Ltd, 1937.
- Singer, Peter. *Practical Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Trotsky, Leon. *The Revolution Betrayed*. London: Faber & Faber, 1937.

PART TWO

Utopia with a Literary Focus

Marxist Utopianism and Modern Irish Drama, 1884–1904: William Morris, W. B. Yeats, and G. B. Shaw

EGLANTINA REMPORT | EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY,
BUDAPEST

Karl Marx's *Capital* was the seminal work of nineteenth-century socio-economic criticism, generating heated social and political debates in Britain and Ireland. There is a view according to which the social theories proposed by Marx and his friend, Friedrich Engels, were themselves utopian, although both social critics repeatedly emphasized their rejection of nineteenth-century utopian socialism—Marx himself claimed bluntly that it was simply “silly” and “stale” and “reactionary.”¹ During the second half of the nineteenth century, Marxism, in its various shapes and forms, emerged as a powerful movement, making its very palpable presence felt in late-Victorian economic, social, and political discourses in England. Henry Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation preached that revolution was the only means by which to change workers' rights and status in society. Sidney Webb's Fabian Society proposed a slower but steadier way of social reconstruction to be achieved through a series of parliamentary reforms. Rev. Stewart Headlam's Christian Socialist congregation intended to put the repeated calls for social change on a religious footing, hoping to change the atheistic character of that Marxist social critique. These various socialist political formations may have been divided as regards to the means by which they intended to achieve social change, but were nonetheless united in their efforts to bring about that change. A key figure in all these emerging developments and political discussions was the artist, designer, and social critic William Morris, who shaped the

¹ Ruth Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 41–68; Marx quoted in Levitas, 62.

ways in which socialism and Marxism developed as political philosophies in Britain and Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century. While looking at the indebtedness of Morris's thinking to that of Marx, this essay also demonstrates the influence of his political thought on Irish literature through the early works of William Butler Yeats (*The Wanderings of Oisín*, *The Countess Cathleen*, *Cathleen ni Houlihan* and *The Land of Heart's Desire*) and George Bernard Shaw (*John Bull's Other Island*).

Karl Marx, William Morris, and William Butler Yeats

William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890) was a Marxist utopia in which the author described his vision of the ideal human society as it would develop in the aftermath of a socialist revolution. The book was written in response to the brutal police attack on 13 November 1887 on a socialist demonstration organized in support of the Irish MP William O'Brien, who had been imprisoned on charges of incitement under a new Coercion Act. The Bloody Sunday March of 1887, as it came to be known, turned out to be a decisive moment in Morris's involvement in the socialist movement, as not long after the demonstration he resigned from the leadership of the Socialist League and from the editorship of the *Commonweal*, its newspaper. *News from Nowhere* was Morris's critical response to the heavy-handed nature of the police crackdown on the socialist demonstration a few years previously. He considered the police's response the worst kind of state interference in social politics. As James W. Hulse so emphatically put it, in Morris's ideal society, depicted in *News from Nowhere*, "the problem of conflict between society and individuals or minorities was virtually non-existent."² Social conflicts could not arise because there was no amassing of properties and goods, no accumulation of wealth and capital. Members of his utopian society were at peace with one another and were content with their places within their communities. Morris depicted a society in which there was no reason for people to rebel against the existing *status quo*, as the merciless practices of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism that Marx had described so effectively had no presence in the life of the community.

² James W. Hulse, *Revolutionists in London* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 121.

In his essay “How I Became a Socialist” Morris pointed toward the works of the Victorian social critic John Ruskin as sources of inspiration for his own thinking.³ E. P. Thompson explains that “neither Marx nor Engels had the time—nor, perhaps, the special abilities—to work out the full implications of their thought in relation to the social function of the arts and to social morality.”⁴ Thompson goes on to argue that “when Morris read *Capital*, he was able to take all that was positive in Ruskin’s thought, and gave it a new coherence and revolutionary direction.”⁵ The idealized, medieval socialism of *News from Nowhere* and the guild-like arrangement of social and industrial life envisaged in the book most certainly hinted at the influence of the Victorian theorist on Morris’s social thought. Where Morris and Ruskin most fundamentally differed in their views, however, was on the necessity of a social revolution as a preliminary measure to the creation of the ideal society. As Margaret Grennan remarked, “Morris became socialist first and read Marx’s social analysis afterwards, and when he did so he found himself in disagreement with Ruskin over the inevitability of class struggle in the process of achieving the ideal form of human society.”⁶ Nonetheless, even after discovering the fundamental differences of their social outlooks, Morris continued to adhere to Ruskin’s conviction that the arts should play a central role in the formation of human society, and that for this reason the arts should be held in high esteem in every community or society.

The latter thought is clearly evident in Morris’s lecture series on nineteenth-century factories, delivered to the Socialist League in 1884. Much in line with Marx’s analysis of factory life in *Capital*, Morris denounced factories as “prisons” where laborers were gathered to take part in a profitmaking exercise that benefited only, he argued, the owners of the factories.⁷ He proposed that instead, factories should be “palaces of industry,” where work was “useful,” “honorable,” and “honored”; where workers were educated to develop “a sense of beauty and interest in life” and “a love of art”; where children were taught the mastery of their crafts and

³ E. P. Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955), 63.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁶ Margaret R. Grennan, *William Morris: Medievalist and Revolutionary* (New York: King’s Crown Press, 1945), 56.

⁷ William Morris, *Factory Work, As It Is and Might Be* (New York: New York Labor News Co., 1922), 12.

grew up to become “good artists” who learned to find “pleasure and honour” in their work as adults.⁸ In these socialist factories children were to be taught the novelties of science, the beauty of literature, and excellent craftsmanship. Morris envisaged these “palaces of industry” to be located in beautiful, natural surroundings, thereby encouraging children and workers to work for their own pleasure and to create beautiful objects. The Arts and Crafts Movement, which grew out of Morris’s preoccupation with the restoration of the arts to their former glory and social importance—an idea he had derived from Ruskin’s analysis of the interrelation between the arts and society in the Middle Ages—promoted the idea of beautifying human surroundings, be they public buildings, factories, gardens, or homes. In a similar vein, the Dun Emer Industries were founded by Evelyn Gleeson and the Yeats sisters, Lily and Lolly, in Dundrum, Co. Dublin, in 1902. This industrial experiment was directly influenced by Morris’s social thought and represented an early twentieth-century attempt to promote the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ireland.

The young William Butler Yeats showed an intense interest in Morris’s socialism, not least, it has to be said, because he recognized its indebtedness to Ruskin’s social ideals. He attended Morris’s Coach House lectures at Kelmscott House in London and moved in the circles of other socialists, including George Bernard Shaw and Annie Besant, who partook in the “Bloody Sunday” demonstration of 13 November 1887.⁹ The demonstration was organized under the auspices of the Social Democratic Federation and the Irish National League; Morris’s presence at the event signaled not only his involvement in the socialist movement in Britain at the time, but also his understanding that the many social problems in Britain were intrinsically entwined with issues relating to Ireland. Marx and Engels had remarked on this in many of their private letters and published works.¹⁰ They were concerned about the ways in which the agricultural situation in Ireland was impacting upon the British labor force. The British labor force increased significantly during the century due to a steady rise in emigration from Ireland to Britain, during and after the years of the Great Famine of the 1840s. This increased labor force pushed down wages, lengthened working hours, and made British workers vulner-

⁸ Ibid., 21, 26–27.

⁹ For more on Yeats attending the Kelmscott lectures see Terence Brown, *The Life of William Butler Yeats* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999), 57.

¹⁰ Ellen Hazelkorn, ed., *Marx and Engels: On Ireland* (New York: American Institute for Marxist Studies, 1981).

able to the demands of factory owners, who were interested in nothing but amassing wealth and maximizing profits. Like Marx and Engels, Morris realized that solving the so-called “Irish Question” would significantly contribute to the improvement of the social situation for workers in industrial Britain.¹¹

William Morris visited Dublin to talk about art and politics in April 1886, when he gave a series of lectures on behalf of the Socialist League. He spoke of “The Aims of Art” at the Molesworth Hall and at the Contemporary Club, of which John Butler Yeats was a member. While the artist father sketched the social critic, the poet son, William Butler Yeats, talked to him about literature.¹² Later, in the preface for his friend and literary collaborator Lady Augusta Gregory’s compilation of the Cuchulain legends, Yeats recalled Morris’s Dublin talk at the Molesworth Hall:

William Morris came to Dublin when I was a boy, and I had some talk with him about these old stories. . . . He spoke of the Irish account of the battle of Clontarf, and of the Norse account, and said that we saw the Norse and the Irish tempers in the two accounts. The Norseman was interested in the way things are done, but the Irishman turned aside, evidently well pleased to be out of so dull a business, to describe beautiful supernatural events. . . . His mind constantly escaped out of daily circumstance, as a bough that has been held down by a weak hand suddenly straightens itself out. His imagination was always running off to Tir nà nOg [*sic*], to the Land of Promise, which is as near to the country people of to-day as it was to Cuchulain and his companions.¹³

The first half of Yeats’s recollection is an informative account of Morris’s knowledge of medieval Irish literature, framed by Matthew Arnold’s discourse relating to the Saxons and the Celts and formulated in his seminal

¹¹ Brown, *The Life of William Butler Yeats*, 57. Brown argues that Yeats’s support for Morris’s utopian socialism had to do with Morris’s support of the Irish cause, yet he does not specify the term “Irish cause,” leaving it open to numerous interpretations.

¹² Jan Marsh, “John Butler Yeats: Portrait of William Morris,” *Journal of William Morris Studies* 15, no. 3 (Winter 2003): 27–29. Jan Marsh quotes William Murphy, *Prodigal Father: The Life of John Butler Yeats 1839–1922* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

¹³ William Butler Yeats, “Preface to Cuchulain of Muirthemne” in Lady Augusta Gregory, *Lady Gregory’s Complete Irish Mythology* (London: Bounty, 2012), 331–36.

critical work, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867). The second half of the recollection contains Yeats's own observations on the Celts of Ireland, who were keen to run off to the land of the fairies in their imagination—to Tír na nÓg, the "Land of the Young."¹⁴

Yeats's own imagination was stirred by the vision of Tír na nÓg, of which he had heard much during his folklore-collecting tours in the west of Ireland. Although Yeats refers to the Ulster cycle as a source of this fairy story, it is in fact in the Ossianic cycle where the description of the Land of the Young is most elaborate. In Lady Gregory's account of the story, published in *Gods and Fighting Men* (1904), the mythical hero, Oisín "of the destroying arms," is found in conversation with St Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, on his life and on the fate of Finn and his companions. Oisín recounts how he came upon the Country of the Young,

a very delightful country under full blossom, and smooth plains in it, and a king's dun that was very grand, and that had every colour in it, and sunny-houses beside it, and palaces of shining stones, made by skilled men. And we saw coming out to meet us three fifties of armed men, very lively and handsome. . . . And there came out after that a hundred beautiful young girls, having cloaks of silk worked with gold, and they gave me a welcome to their own country.¹⁵

Oisín meets the king, who tells him that he will have a long and lasting life and he will be young forever if he decided to stay in the king's country. Oisín marries Niamh, the king's daughter, whom he finally abandons, for he is longing to meet the *fianna*, his boyhood companions. Yeats provides a more artistic description of the fairy country in his 1889 epic poem, *The Wanderings of Oisín*. He describes the land of the *sidhe*, "where men have heaped no burial-mounds," as one in which fairies sing and dance, where "music and love and sleep await" the wanderer. Oisín's meeting with Niamh is also more theatrical:

¹⁴ In Irish Gaelic "Tír" means both "country" and "land." The spelling differs for "Land of the Young" but "Tír na nÓg" is the generally accepted version. References to *Tír na nÓg* are scattered in Irish mythology and folklore; it can be best described as a mythical location, the land of the gods and fairies. Yeats himself thought of it as "the country of bodiless beauty," which lived "forgotten by proud and learned people, among simple and poor people" in Ireland. W. B. Yeats, *Writings on Irish Folklore, Legend and Myth* (London: Penguin, 1993), 141.

¹⁵ Gregory, *Lady Gregory's Complete Irish Mythology*, 294

And Niamh blew three merry notes
Out of a little silver trump;
.....
And from the woods rushed out a band
Of men and ladies, hand in hand,
And singing, singing all together;
Their brows were bright as fragrant milk,
Their cloaks made out of yellow silk,
.....
And laughed like murmurs of the sea¹⁶

Yeats's imagining of the fairy land as one of music and dance, of song and joy, where "God is joy and joy is God," is significant with regard to his vision of the ideal way of living and to the future he envisaged for Ireland, which came to the fore in many of his early plays.

Although not stated explicitly, it is to Tír na nÓg that the fairy child is calling the newly-wed young woman, Mary Bruin, in Yeats's 1894 play, *The Land of Heart's Desire*. Mary is living with her husband's parents, in *their* house, and is still treated like a child because she has not yet given birth to a son or daughter. Mary feels entrapped in this household where neither the arts nor literature are valued and where household duties are always calling. As means of escape, she listens to the words of the fairy child, who invites her to the Land of Heart's Desire with a musical chant:

You shall go with me, newly-married bride,
.....
Where beauty has no ebb, decay no flood,
But joy is wisdom, time and endless song.
.....
Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise,
Where nobody gets old and godly and grave,
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue,
Where kind tongues bring no captivity;¹⁷

¹⁶ W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems* (London: Picador/Macmillan, 1990), 415–16

¹⁷ W. B. Yeats, *Collected Plays* (London: Macmillan, 1963), 69–70.

Despite warnings from the family and the parish priest, Mary gives a serious consideration to accepting the fairy child's invitation, and in the last moments of the play she decides to follow the call of the *sidhe*, choosing the land of her heart's desire over the land of the living.¹⁸

Oisín's and Mary's land of heart's desire was the utopian place that Yeats himself sought to find. It was a dreamland where the arts were valued, both for their own sake and for the social changes that their influence on working people would bring. Yet the ending of the play suggests that, in Yeats's view, it was only possible to enter this dreamland if those looking for it offered themselves as human sacrifices. Following the call of the fairy child and hearing the songs and dances of the *sidhe*, Mary collapses on the threshold of the house as her soul leaves her mortal body and enters the everlasting world. The theme of the inevitability of sacrifice is one that carries the influence of Morris's sociopolitical thought. Morris makes it clear in *News from Nowhere* that social change can only happen after a revolutionary turn in human society. Morris envisages a new socialist world to emerge only in the aftermath of a revolution, which would destroy the old capitalist system and allow for a new world to be built on its ruins.¹⁹ Such revolutionary sentiment was also palpable in the many political societies in London, some of which Yeats was a member. The Irish Republican Brotherhood and the London Young Ireland Society, of which he served as president, were active in keeping the old revolutionary spirit alive. Revolutionary sentiment pervaded many of his early plays, most famously *Cathleen ní Houlihan*, co-authored with Lady Gregory, in which the newly-wed Peter Gillane follows the calls of Mother Ireland, personified by Cathleen, to fight for Ireland in the 1798 rebellion. While not revolutionary in senti-

¹⁸ Considering the fairy world as a type of socialist utopia is not far-fetched, as pointed out by Caroline Sumpter, *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 88–130. Sumpter examined fairy tales as platforms used to disseminate late-nineteenth-century socialist thought; she found that fairy tales were “perceived as sacred relics of the pre-industrial past, and augers of a post-industrial future” and “became political tools in forging a new generation of socialists” (127). Sumpter also examined the influence of Ruskin's and Morris's social thought on *fin-de-siècle* fairy tales; her findings shed an interesting new light on turn-of-the-century socialist ideology and its relation to Yeats's early poems and plays.

¹⁹ William Morris, *News from Nowhere* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891), 143–72. For Morris's thoughts on the redemptive nature of violence, see Ingrid Hanson, *William Morris and the Uses of Violence, 1856–1890* (London: Anthem Press, 2013), 131–66. For Morris's thoughts on violent social transformation and sacrifice see *John Ball* and *News from Nowhere*.

ment, *The Countess Cathleen*, in which a woman of aristocratic birth sacrifices herself for the people living on her land who are verging on starvation, is another early Yeats play that plays on the theme of self-sacrifice. R. F. Foster wrote that for many years, Morris was Yeats's "idea of a heroic leader"—the word "heroic" here emphasizing the two men's shared interest in medieval heroic literature, as well as hinting at the fact that in his writings the social critic often pointed out the inevitability of self-sacrifice in the event of a violent social transformation.²⁰

Michael McAteer has argued that "Yeats's early plays bore a significant relation to Marx's *Capital*, mediated through the influence of Morris."²¹ *The Countess Cathleen*, for instance, was in part a reflection on commodity fetishism, which Marx identified as a by-product of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism. Marx wrote that commodities "are the first result of the immediate process of capitalist production, its product. . . . As a *commodity*, the product of capital, must enter the process of exchange, and this means not merely the actual physical process, but also that it must submit to the various changes in form that we have specified as the metamorphosis of the commodity."²² In the play, which bears the influence of Goethe's *Faust*, the soul of the countess becomes a commodity and acquires an exchange value. She gives up her life so that the lives of her tenants could be saved, despite the fact that they had already sold their souls to demons, appearing on the scene in the figures of merchants. Although the play is set in feudal times, it reflects very contemporary concerns about human societies in which everything acquired an exchange value and was commodified, including human life.²³ It is significant that Yeats chose to criticize contemporary tendencies of intense commodification against a feudalistic historical backdrop. Terence Brown has pointed out that even though Yeats attended Morris's "Sunday Night" lectures, he had little to share with the "working-

²⁰ R. F. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1:59. For Yeats adapting Morrisite socialism, see Foster, 64.

²¹ Michael McAteer, *Yeats and European Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 5.

²² Karl Marx, *Capital* (London: Penguin Classics, 1990), 1:974.

²³ Yeats commented also on the commodification of human life in *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, in which a bag of gold stands in for the protagonist Michael Gillane's fiancée, Delia, emphasizing that the choice the protagonist is condemned to make was not simply of political but also of a material nature. McAteer, *Yeats and European Drama*, 27.

class revolutionaries” who made up most of the audience.²⁴ Brown has claimed that it was Yeats’s interest in imperialism that presented itself as an obstacle for the poet to fully submerge himself in the Marxist scene of London.²⁵ In fact it was the poet’s admiration for feudalism—or feudal socialism, as it had been propagated by Ruskin—that influenced his social thinking at this point. Yeats was not alone in his sentiments, as almost all of the aspiring playwrights of the emerging dramatic movement chose rural Ireland as setting for their plays and Irish tenants, preferably from the west of Ireland, as their characters. In fact, it was not until the appearance of Sean O’Casey on the theater scene in the 1920s that the voices of urban, working class Irishmen were heard on the metropolitan stage of Dublin. Curiously, even James Connolly, founder of the Irish Socialist Republican Party and later the Irish Labour Party, used a rural scene for his most well-known and influential play, which he staged just weeks before the Easter Rising of 1916. Connolly’s *Under Which Flag?* presented on stage the dilemma of a young Irishman who had joined the British army with the hope of acquiring a substantial pension after retirement but is then asked by his sweetheart to join instead the Fenian Brotherhood in their military campaign against British rule in Ireland. The urban, working class environment of O’Casey’s *The Plough and the Stars* (1926), written as a critical response to Connolly’s play following the Irish Civil War (1921–23), is completely absent in *Under Which Flag?* This was so even though Connolly’s play was staged at the working men’s theater of the Irish Transport and General Workers’ Union headquarters at Liberty Hall in Dublin.²⁶

Karl Marx, William Morris, and G. B. Shaw

As his friend and biographer, Frank Harris wrote of George Bernard Shaw that “his Socialism has coloured all his work.”²⁷ Shaw’s socialism was more moderate than Morris’s, who actively propagated radical social politics during the 1880s. Shaw was taken with Morris’s radical politics for a short period, but as time went on he began to turn his attention toward

²⁴ Brown, *The Life of William Butler Yeats*, 57.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ For O’Casey’s response to Connolly’s play see James Moran, introduction to *Four Irish Rebel Plays* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007), 23.

²⁷ Frank Harris, *Bernard Shaw* (London: Gollancz, 1931), 135.

policies that propagated gradual social change by means of democratic reforms. The Fabian Society, of which Shaw became a chief ideologist and spokesperson, cut its ties with Morris's Socialist League in the second half of the 1880s. The break signaled not only the mounting political differences between the two political parties but also the increasing differences in the social outlooks of their two leading men. Out of this schism grew the Fabian Parliamentary League, which advocated that social reforms be achieved solely by parliamentary means following Shaw's strong recommendations. In *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, edited by Shaw and published in 1889, he made it clear that the state and its machinery could be used for advancing the cause of socialism, as it could do so more effectively than the agitations of the working class and its leaders, who were then organizing a grand-scale centennial revolution to mark the destruction of the old social system in France in 1789.²⁸ This view was markedly different from Morris's, who was strongly opposed to any form of state intervention to help further the cause of socialism in England. He considered the police atrocities following the Bloody Sunday demonstrations in London to be the worst form of state interference, a pivotal example of why the state and its machinery should be left out of the account of any social reform in England. Hulse has pointed out that Morris's break with radical revolutionary politics following the events of Bloody Sunday in 1887 and his break with the Socialist League in 1890 instigated a rapprochement between Morris and Shaw, although the former never fully subscribed to the latter's strictly constitutionalist approach.²⁹

Constitutionalism, however, had not always been on Shaw's political agenda. He read Marx's *Capital*, in Deville's French translation, in the early 1880s and began to attend the Marx Reading Circle at Anne Burrows Gilchrist's Hampstead home, which was run by her daughter after the mother's death in November 1885. "Marx was a revelation," said Shaw. "He opened my eyes to the facts of history and civilization, gave me an entirely fresh conception of the universe, provided me with a purpose and a mission in life."³⁰ Some of the early manifestos of the Fabian Society, members of which made up the Hampstead reading group, clearly predicted that a civil war would be the only possible way of

²⁸ George Bernard Shaw, ed., *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (London: Fabian Society, 1889). On the state machinery, see 187; on the revolution, 186.

²⁹ Hulse, *Revolutionists in London*, 127.

³⁰ Quoted in Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1988), 1:130.

ending the English economic and political *status quo*, which the Fabians held responsible for the degradation of human life experienced in sweat factories and city slums. Nonetheless, Shaw later made it clear that the thought of inciting a revolution in Britain was not on the long-term political program of the Fabian Society.³¹ As Erich Strauss has put it, as their social ideals crystalized under the intellectual leadership of Shaw, the Fabians began to reject the notion that class struggle was the sole motivation of historical processes and that the working class was the “sole agent of Socialist propaganda and social reconstruction.”³² Essentially middle class in origin and way of life, they did not believe that revolution was the only workable solution to the many social problems of the nineteenth century, and they propagated more peaceful means by which to achieve social change.

The Marx Reading Circle renamed itself as the Hampstead Historical Club in 1886 and continued to hold its meetings at the library of Grace Gilchrist's Hampstead home. On 25 May 1887 Shaw delivered a lecture there entitled “Utopias.” In it he referred to a number of literary utopias, analyzing in detail Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, Sir Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Michel de Montaigne's *Essay on the Cannibals*, and James Harrington's *Oceana*, and referring at points to Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.³³ More's *Utopia*, re-printed by Morris's Kelmscott Press in 1893, was highly influential on Morris when he was composing *News from Nowhere*, Morris's “Nowhere” being a direct reference to More's “Noplace” or “Utopia.” Shaw, for his part, thought that the sixteenth-century tract offered “no solution for the social problems in modern life.”³⁴ He was deeply interested in science in its various forms; therefore, Campanella's *City of the Sun* and Bacon's *New Atlantis* offered him more food for thought. Shaw thought Montaigne's essay worthwhile to mention for its communist approach to industrial, agricultural, and social matters, and for its influence on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the playwright's seventeenth-century humanist utopia. He described Harrington's *Oceana* as “indescribable and indisputable” but

³¹ Ibid., 133.

³² Erich Strauss, *Bernard Shaw: Art and Socialism* (London: Gollancz, 1942), 18–19.

³³ George Bernard Shaw, “Utopia” (lecture, 25 May 1887) in *Shaw and Science Fiction*, ed. Milton T. Wolf (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 65–80.

³⁴ Shaw, “Utopia,” 69.

did not ponder it at any length. He concluded his lecture by referring to his countryman Jonathan Swift and his work, *Gulliver's Travels*. He stated that it had “not a trace of the communism of More, Campanella and Montaigne,” thus signalling to his mostly Marxist audience the main purposes of his talk: to indicate the existence of pre-Marxist literary utopias and to point out their failure to offer viable sociopolitical solutions to the scientifically minded modern man.

Foster's argument as to the “overriding claims of art upon life,” which Morris propagated and Yeats found so compelling, was not a concern that Shaw shared with these two men.³⁵ Shaw supported Morris's Arts and Crafts Movement in its efforts to make Victorian homes and houses more comfortable and beautiful, and showed a keen interest in programs that aimed at ameliorating the poor living and working conditions of factory workers living in oversized manufacturing cities, but his public pronouncements on the matter were more moderate than Morris's. Morris declared in his “Art and Socialism” lecture, delivered in June 1884, that the arts had lost their long-held social supremacy over materialism and commercialism because nineteenth-century capitalism has “exalted Commerce into a sacred religion.”³⁶ He proposed that both art and worker should be set “free from the slavery of Capitalist-Commerce,” and that the pending social revolution should begin with the “the rebuilding of the Art of the people.”³⁷ Shaw and the Fabians did address certain issues concerning art and its relation to nineteenth-century materialism, declaring sternly that “the true artist is at war with commercialism.”³⁸ Nonetheless, their social program was more concerned with the upkeep of public places of leisure and education, such as museums, parks, art galleries, and libraries, than with improving workers' working conditions or with the production of high-quality products for the market place.³⁹

Morris's and Yeats's aesthetic socialist utopianism was noticeably absent in Shaw's early works, including *John Bull's Other Island* (1904).

³⁵ Foster, *W. B. Yeats*, 64.

³⁶ William Morris, “Art and Socialism,” *The Aims and Ideals of the English Socialists of To-day* (lecture) (London: E. E. M. and W. L. S., 1884), 6, 10.

³⁷ Morris, “Art and Socialism” 25, 50.

³⁸ William Clarke, “The Fabian Society,” *The Fabian Essays in Socialism*, ed. G. B. Shaw (Boston: The Ball Publishing Co, 1911), xxxv. This American edition of the *Fabian Essays* contains this particular essay by William Clarke. All other references in this paper to the *Fabian Essays* are references to the English edition from 1889 and not the American edition.

³⁹ See essays in Shaw, *Fabian Essays in Socialism*.

As Shaw remarked in the first preface of the play, Yeats asked him to write for the Irish Literary Theatre after plays of theirs had successful runs at the Avenue Theatre in London. Yeats's *The Land of Heart's Desire* and Shaw's *Arms and the Man* were performed to enthusiastic audiences at the Avenue in 1894. The influence of the infamous Russian anarchist, Sergius Stepniak, an acquaintance of Morris, Yeats, and Shaw from the Bedford Park circles, is detectable in both plays through their play with the theme of sacrifice, although in markedly different ways. By this time, Shaw and Yeats had known each other for a number of years, having first met at Morris's Kelmscott House meetings in February 1888. The two men could not have been more different in character; Shaw was interested primarily in economics, politics and science, while Yeats was attracted to art, spiritualism, and theosophy. Yet they recognized each other's talent, and when the Irish Literary Theatre began its first season in Dublin, Yeats considered his friend's earlier offer and asked him to compose a play. A few years later Shaw submitted his piece *John Bull's Other Island* to the theater's reading committee, hoping that the Abbey Theatre would put on his play. After deliberations, the play was turned down. It was deemed to be too difficult to produce on the small stage of the Abbey Theatre, and it did not really fit the political and aesthetic program of the new institution. *John Bull's Other Island*, therefore, premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in London, to the delight of English audiences.⁴⁰

John Bull's Other Island probed certain Marxist concerns over the economic situation in Ireland. One such concern was that, should the economic situation not improve in Ireland, the number of economic migrants would continue to increase in Britain. In the play, the City businessman Tim Broadbent travels to Ireland to develop an estate for the Land Development Syndicate. His idea is "to take a little money out of England and spend it in Ireland," making use of Sir Ebenezer Howard's plans for a Garden City. The Glaswegian, Tim Haffigan (of Irish origin), mistakenly believes that the businessman intends to bring heaven to earth in the creation of an earthly paradise.⁴¹ Smiling at what he sees as an Irishman's simple-minded proposition, Broadbent explains that his idea is to create *the* ideal city in Ireland. While saying this, he pulls out a number of pamphlets and a book by Ebenezer Howard to show the plans to the rather

⁴⁰ Foster, *W. B. Yeats*, 325–26; Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1989), 2:82–83; 97–100.

⁴¹ The allusion here is to William Morris, *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–70).

uninterested Scot. Sir Ebenezer Howard was an urban planner and the founder of the Garden Cities Association (later Town and Country Planning Association), whose book *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (1902) proposed a new, scientific approach to modern urban planning. Howard's utopian approach proposed a *rapprochement* between country and urban living, taking from each way of life its best aspects for a human populace. Howard's approach was decidedly Marxist in that his suggestions critiqued the social failings of nineteenth-century capitalism and criticized the ways in which industrialization affected the lives of factory workers, damning them to live in dirty, unhygienic, and overcrowded cities, often in city slums. Tim Broadbent intends to realize Howard's utopian urban vision in Ireland, hoping that the Garden City project would create new job opportunities for local people.⁴²

To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform was the original title of Howard's book when it first came out in 1898. The work was the author's reflection on Edward Bellamy's utopia, *Looking Backward*, of 1888, as was Morris's *News from Nowhere* of 1890. The title of the book is compelling as it brings to mind the three "great principles of the Liberal Party." Broadbent describes them to the people of Rosscullen when he is trying to win the local parliamentary seat:

BROADBENT, *collecting himself for a political deliverance*. [. . .] Now I am a Liberal.

You know the great principles of the Liberal Party. Peace—

FATHER DEMPSEY, *piously*. Hear! hear!

BROADBENT, *encouraged*. Thank you. Retrenchment— (*he waits for further applause*).

MATTHEW, *timidly*. What might rethrenchment mane now?

BROADBENT. It means an immense reduction in the burden of the rates and taxes.

MATTHEW, *respectfully approving*. Dhats right. Dhats right, sir.

BROADBENT, *perfunctorily*. And, of course, Reform.

CORNELIUS / FATHER DEMPSEY / DORAN, *conventionally*. Of course.

MATTHEW, *still suspicious*. Hwat does Reform mane, sir? Does it mane altherin annythin dhats as it is now?

⁴² For the indebtedness of the social philosophy of Sir Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement to earlier propositions by Marx, Ruskin and Morris, see Simon Parker, *Urban Theory and the Urban Experience: Encountering the City* (London: Routledge, 2004), 71; and Simon Dentith, *Nineteenth-Century British Literature Then and Now* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 127.

BROADBENT, *impressively*. It means, Mr Haffigan, maintaining those reforms which have already been conferred on humanity by the Liberal Party, and trusting for future developments to the free activity of a free people on the basis of those reforms.⁴³

Broadbent's speech, of course, is a speech of a liberal politician who believes in the principle of promoting and developing free trade between free and, truth be told, colonized nations. It is a speech delivered in the best tradition of liberal political oratory. There can be no doubt that Haffigan's questions to Broadbent, delivered in his west of Ireland brogue, were Shaw's way of satirically mocking the pomposity of British liberal self-assurance evident in Broadbent's high-flown rhetoric. However, Broadbent's words are not a mockery of the liberal ideals in themselves. Shaw strongly believed that the ideals of liberalism *could* be harnessed with the social critique of Marxism, just as he believed that the traditions of Toryism could be the basis for political anarchism.⁴⁴ Shaw's view was that the all-too-well-known binary oppositions, which had been set up to describe and justify economic plans and political strategies to convince contemporary audiences, and which had been expanded greatly in nineteenth-century political and social discourse, were long out of date—if they ever really were applicable.

Shaw also rejected the generally held view that the Saxons and the Celts were fundamentally different in character, a view derived to a considerable degree from Matthew Arnold's writings, including *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867). Tim Broadbent, the typical English businessman, for instance, is supposed to be practical and pragmatic in all matters and affairs, and is supposed to have been born to govern. Yet he turns out to be impressionable, sentimental, and sensitive when he discovers his love of the countryside, of past times, and of women after crossing the Irish Sea. He claims that what is needed in Ireland is English leadership and guidance, especially in affairs relating to governance, yet he—the Englishman—is incapable of driving a motorcar safely down

⁴³ Bernard Shaw, *Collected Plays* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co, 1975), 2:967–68.

⁴⁴ Indeed, Declan Kiberd describes Shaw precisely as a “Tory Anarchist,” following in a tradition of satire that dates back to his Dublin Anglo-Irish predecessor, Jonathan Swift: “Shaw as Tory Anarchist shared Swift's conviction that whatever survived his corrosive mockeries would offer a bedrock of social wisdom.” Declan Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 343.

the streets of Rosscullen. This incident, which Yeats thought impossible to stage at the Abbey Theatre, is a key moment of the play. Broadbent, trying to win the village people's love and respect (for his own selfish reasons), condescendingly instructs his valet, Hodson, before he sits in the car:

BROADBENT, *with enthusiasm*. Certainly, Mr Haffigan: it will be quite delightful to drive with a pig in the car: I shall feel quite like an Irishman. Hodson: stay with Mr Haffigan; and give him a hand with the pig if necessary. Come, Larry; and help me (*He rushes away through the shrubbery*).⁴⁵

Broadbent's drive thought the village is a disaster and is recounted with great joy by a local lad, Barney Doran: the motorcar started with a loud noise, frightening the pig resting in Patsy Farrell's lap at the back of the car and making it jump forward, obstructing Broadbent's view of the road.

The incident brings to mind the beginning of the play when Broadbent, inspired by his own belief in the goodness of spreading the news of industrial progress to all the corners of the British Empire—and gaining financial benefit in consequence—sets out for Ireland to create a Garden City in Rosscullen. His utopian ideals are progressive, but he forgets, or refuses, to take into account the will and the needs of the local people. So there he is later on in the play, driving a motorcar down the main street of an Irish village, with a frightened pig squashed between the steering wheel and himself, and him squeezing the pig's tail with every breaking move he makes. His offer to drive a local man and his pig home after a meeting turns into a disaster, partly because he is too self-assured when drawing up the plan—he would not accept that fancy, new motorcars are not made to transport livestock—and partly because he can not, and *would* not, want to imagine that anything could go wrong in such a brilliant plan as his. In this instance the playwright intended to show his audience that things indeed *can* go wrong when Englishmen, with English liberal self-assurance, arrive in places of which they know little to nothing, and assume that their ways of thinking and living are *the* only possible ways, as Broadbent does earlier in the play. Shaw elaborated on this matter also in his preface to *John Bull's Other Island*, in which he gives a lengthy account of the Denshawai atrocities in Egypt. The small Egyptian locale became known in Britain and Ireland because a number of local people were executed by the British

⁴⁵ Shaw, *Collected Plays*, 2:973–74.

colonial administration for objecting to British soldiers' killing of birds that were regarded as sacred by the people living there, because the soldiers wanted to play the popular British game of pigeon shooting.⁴⁶

Tim Broadbent's counterpart, Larry Doyle, is another figure who subverts the binary opposition traditionally considered to distinguish the Saxons and the Celts. He was born in Ireland, to the Doyle family of Rosscullen. As a civil engineer working in London, his business is to "join countries" in the service of building and maintaining the British Empire. According to Arnold's views on Celtic racial temperament, Doyle should not have the Saxon's characteristic measure, balance, or patience for science but, instead, the Celt's deep-rooted love of beauty, charm, and spirituality.⁴⁷ However, Doyle's heart is untouched by the beauty of his homeland and by the love of the woman who has been waiting for him in Rosscullen. He is practical and pragmatic, especially in political and economic matters. He is a Marxist when talking about cheap labor and low wages in Ireland, but quite a Tory when assessing the impact of this cheap labor force on the British economy; an anti-nationalist when his father quizzes him on political matters, but a nationalist when lecturing to his countrymen on the necessity of abolishing the landowning classes in Ireland. He claims that he had "learnt to live in a real world and not in an imaginary one," but yearns to find "a country to live in where the facts were not brutal and the dreams not unreal."⁴⁸ He scolds his friend and business partner, Broadbent, for going to Ireland "on a sentimental expedition for perfectly ridiculous reasons" with his head "full of political nonsense that would not take in any ordinarily intelligent donkey," just as he scolds his countrymen for always dreaming and relying solely on their imagination, for he knows that "imagination's such a torture that you cant [*sic*] bear it without whisky."⁴⁹

Doyle reprimands Peter Keegan, the defrocked Catholic priest, for always "dreaming! dreaming! dreaming! dreaming!" but fails to see that the priest's dreams are not far from his own.⁵⁰ At the end of the play, in

⁴⁶ Shaw, "Preface to the first edition of *John Bull's Other Island*," in *Collected Plays*, 2: 808–71; 853–71.

⁴⁷ Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1867), 102–3, 115.

⁴⁸ Shaw, *Collected Plays*, 2: 913, 919.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 910, 912.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 909.

what is considered to be the most utopian passage of Shaw's work, the defrocked priest describes his vision of the ideal place:

In my dreams it is a country where the State is the Church and the Church the people: three in one and one in three. It is a commonwealth in which work is play and play is life: three in one and one in three. It is a temple in which the priest is the worshipper and the worshipper the worshipped: three in one and one in three. It is a godhead in which all life is human and all humanity divine: three in one and one in three. It is, in short, the dream of a madman.⁵¹

Answering Broadbent's question, Keegan here is, of course, referring to his vision of heaven. His land of heart's desire, however, is not that dissimilar to his countryman Doyle's, who declares in an emotional outburst that he would want to see the Roman Catholic Church as the Established Church of Ireland, and would have her compete "with Rome itself for the chair of St Peter and the citadel of the Church," for "in Ireland the people is the Church and the Church the people." Keegan is longing to get to heaven, for he sees that the "foolish dream of efficiency" in which Broadbent firmly believes and that, in Keegan's view, is the basis of an abusive capitalist economic system, will inevitably come to an end. Addressing his words to Broadbent and to Doyle, he adds the following to Broadbent's dream of building the Garden City of Rosscullen:

KEEGAN, *with polished irony*. [. . .] You are both, I am told, thoroughly efficient civil engineers; and I have no doubt the golf links will be a triumph of your art. Mr Broadbent will get into parliament most efficiently, which is more than St Patrick could do if he were alive now. You may even build the hotel efficiently if you can find enough efficient masons, carpenters, and plumbers, which I rather doubt. [. . .] When the hotel becomes insolvent [. . .] your English business habits will secure the thorough efficiency of the liquidation. You will reorganize the scheme efficiently; you will liquidate its second bankruptcy efficiently [. . .]; you will get rid of its original shareholders efficiently after efficiently ruining them; and you will finally profit very efficiently by getting that hotel for a few shillings in the pound.⁵²

⁵¹ Ibid., 1021.

⁵² Ibid., 1017.

This passage continues with Keegan prophesizing the ruination of the land and its people through the workings of capitalism and its financiers. According to Keegan, the local people will be either driven away from their lands for being unable to pay their mortgages, or forced to work as slave laborers as they struggle to please the capitalist shareholders who come to enjoy the golf course, cricket club, and archaeological sites of Rosscullen. He envisages the future as one that—if Broadbent’s “gospel of efficiency” is listened to and accepted—will be the ruination of both the land and the people.⁵³

Conclusion

John Bull’s Other Island’s Peter Keegan is essentially a spiritual man, whose utopianism is not only infused with religious idealism but also permeated by oriental mysticism. Keegan once gave absolution to a dark-skinned Hindu who faced death not with defiance, but with acceptance of its imminent arrival. This Hindu revealed to the priest that in his religion, the earthly life was seen as a penance for crimes committed in a former existence. Keegan felt “the mystery of this world suddenly revealed” to him, bringing him the understanding that this world was “very clearly a place of torment and penance.”⁵⁴ The fact that the play concludes with the two civil engineers leaving to look for the site of the new hotel seems to suggest that, in Shaw’s view, the victory of scientific over spiritual utopianism was inevitable, as the world seemed to be ruled by essentially materialist concerns. Concealed in the last words of the play are the playwright’s comments on the ways in which theosophist spirituality expands into the realm of Marxist social philosophy. The playwright witnessed this in the life of his former partner in love and revolution, Annie Besant, who turned away from street socialism “to become high priestess of [Madame Blavatsky’s] *The Secret Doctrine*” (1888).⁵⁵ John Trevor noted that at the turn of the century, all roads were leading to socialism, and it was only a matter of time before socialism blended with alternative spirituality in the form of theosophist philosophy.⁵⁶ Besant, who championed the cause

⁵³ Ibid., 1016.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 990–91.

⁵⁵ Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw*, 1:171.

⁵⁶ John Trevor, the *fin-de-siècle* preacher and social critic, is quoted in Sumpter, *The Victorian Press*, 127.

of social transformation during the 1880s, began to turn her attention to theosophist philosophy in the following decade, as her series of lectures for Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society demonstrate.⁵⁷ Arthur Lipow has commented that in her lectures to theosophical students, Besant took "large helpings" from Edward Bellamy's works, including *Looking Backward*, as she was making the case for the necessity to establish a "theosophist utopia on earth."⁵⁸ Shaw, for his part, was not taken with the spiritualist approach to social transformation as he saw it develop in the works of Madame Blavatsky and Besant.

As opposed to Shaw, Yeats was deeply interested in Madame Blavatsky's oriental mysticism, and this interest permeated many of his early works, including *The Wanderings of Oisín*, in which the wanderer arrives to the Land of the Young, where "God is joy and joy is God."⁵⁹ The passage describing the wanderer's first experiences in the land of song and dance brings to mind the concluding part of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924), the final section of which starts with the Gokul Ashtami festival taking place in the Hindu native state of Mau. Along with others assembled at the feast, Professor Narayan Godbole, barefoot in a white robe and a pale blue turban, waits for the birth of Krishna. Krishna's arrival is anticipated by much hypnotic dancing and entranced singing of the Hindu mantra, "God si [*sic*] Love." The festival is a joyful gathering of merry and playful adults and children celebrating the birth of their god in what Forster describes as "benign confusion."⁶⁰ This celebration of life is strangely similar to that taking place in Yeats's vision of the utopian land of Tír na nÓg, and it is this celebration of life that the poet was hoping would take hold of England, and more importantly, of Ireland,

⁵⁷ See Annie Besant, "Industry under Socialism" in *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, ed. G. B. Shaw (London: Fabian Society, 1889); *The Ancient Wisdom* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1897) and *Ideals of Theosophy* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophist Office, 1912).

⁵⁸ Arthur Lipow, *Authoritarian Socialism in America: Edward Bellamy and Nationalist Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 226–27. The Cold War between the United States of America and the USSR forms the critical parameters of Lipow's book; nonetheless, the work is highly informative in its discussion of the overlap between theosophy and socialism in the work of Annie Besant and Madame Blavatsky. In his discussion, Lipow refers to Annie Besant's theosophical-socialist tract, *The Changing World and Lectures to Theosophical Students* (1910).

⁵⁹ Yeats, *Collected Poems*, 418.

⁶⁰ E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (London: Penguin, 1989), 287.

through the restoration of the arts to their former status and the revival of the ancient legends of the land. The poet imagined the orient, especially the recently “united” subcontinent of India, as a place where the arts were valued as integral parts of everyday life. He fostered life-long friendships with Hindu mystics, most famously with Mohini Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, and Shri Purohit Swami, who supplied him with a continuous flow of mystical thought that continued to enrich Yeats’s social and aesthetic ideals. The centrality of art that he detected in oriental thought was a theme to which he continued to return in many of his late poetic works, including “Sailing to Byzantium.” The poem carries the themes of *The Wanderings of Oisín*, as well as Morris’s utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*, in that it brings back the water-wandering themes of the earlier works. What Krishan Kumar mentions in his essay, “A Pilgrimage of Hope: William Morris’s Journey to Utopia,” namely that protagonists of utopias often set out on physical and spiritual journeys to find a world that is atemporal and exists outside the perceivable realms of time and space, is also perceivable in Yeats’s poem.⁶¹ Kumar continues by pointing out that many utopias describe a character’s journey to an ideal place, a “pilgrimage to a sacred place,” and gives the example of William Guest’s quest for the land of spiritual and aesthetic pleasures in *News from Nowhere*.⁶² In light of this, Yeats’s journey to the imaginary, ancient city of Byzantium can be viewed as the poet’s *pilgrimage* to the “holy city.”⁶³ Written at the time when both Ireland and continental Europe had been drowned in the “blood-dimmed tide” of war, the aging poet still hoped to find a place where art and the artist were valued. This hope endured, even if the consequence of finding his land of heart’s desire involved surrendering his physical existence in order to live on in a beautiful, singing “artifice of eternity.”⁶⁴ Yeats’s poem is only one of the many examples that reveal the poet’s preference of spiritualist and aesthetic utopianism over the scientific-type of utopianism that many of his contemporaries, including his fellow-dramatist, Shaw, were propagating at the turn of the twentieth century.

⁶¹ Krishan Kumar, “A Pilgrimage of Hope: William Morris’s Journey to Utopia,” *Utopian Studies* 5 (1994): 94.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 92.

⁶³ Yeats, “Sailing to Byzantium,” *Collected Poems*, 217.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 218.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, Matthew. *On the Study of Celtic Literature*. London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1867.
- Besant, Annie. *The Ancient Wisdom*. London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1897.
- . *Ideals of Theosophy*. Adyar, Madras: The Theosophist Office, 1912.
- . “Industry under Socialism.” In *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, edited by George Bernard Shaw, 150–69. London: Fabian Society, 1889.
- Brown, Terence. *The Life of William Butler Yeats*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999.
- Clarke, William. “The Fabian Society.” In *The Fabian Essays in Socialism*, edited by George Bernard Shaw, xxiii–xli. Boston: The Ball Publishing Co, 1911.
- Dentith, Simon. *Nineteenth-Century British Literature Then and Now*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
- Forster, E. M. *A Passage to India*. London: Penguin, 1989.
- Foster, R. F. *W. B. Yeats: A Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Gregory, Augusta. *Lady Gregory’s Complete Irish Mythology*. London: Bounty, 2012.
- Grennan, Margaret R. *William Morris: Medievalist and Revolutionary*. New York: King’s Crown Press, 1945.
- Hanson, Ingrid. *William Morris and the Uses of Violence, 1856–1890*. London: Anthem Press, 2013.
- Harris, Frank. *Bernard Shaw*. London: Gollancz, 1931.
- Hazelkorn, Ellen ed. *Marx and Engels: On Ireland*. New York: American Institute for Marxist Studies, 1981.
- Holroyd, Michael. *Bernard Shaw*. 2 vols. London: Chatto and Windus, 1988–89.
- Hulse, James W. *Revolutionists in London*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1970.
- Kiberd, Declan. *Irish Classics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Kumar, Krishan. “A Pilgrimage of Hope: William Morris’s Journey to Utopia.” *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 89–107.
- Levitas, Ruth. *The Concept of Utopia*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2010.
- Lipow, Arthur. *Authoritarian Socialism in America: Edward Bellamy and Nationalist Movement*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
- Marsh, Jan. “John Butler Yeats: Portrait of William Morris.” *Journal of William Morris Studies* 15, no. 3 (Winter 2003): 27–29.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital*. London: Penguin Classics, 1990.
- McAteer, Michael. *Yeats and European Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Murphy, William. *Prodigal Father: The Life of John Butler Yeats 1839–1922*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- Moran, James. “Introduction.” In *Four Irish Rebel Plays*, 1–41. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007.
- Morris, William. *Art and Socialism: The Aims and Ideals of the English Socialists of To-day*. London: E. E. M. and W. L. S., 1884.
- . *The Earthly Paradise*. London: F. S. Ellis, 1870.
- . *Factory Work, As It Is and Might Be*. New York: New York Labor News Co., 1922.

- . *News from Nowhere*. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891.
- Parker, Simon. *Urban Theory and the Urban Experience: Encountering the City*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Shaw, George Bernard. *Collected Plays*. Vol. 2. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co, 1975.
- , ed. *Fabian Essays in Socialism*. London: Fabian Society, 1889.
- . “Utopia.” In *Shaw and Science Fiction*, edited by Milton T. Wolf, 65–80. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.
- Strauss, Erich. *Bernard Shaw: Art and Socialism*. London: Gollancz, 1942.
- Sumpter, Caroline. *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Thompson, E. P. *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955.
- Yeats, William Butler. *Collected Plays*. London: Macmillan, 1963.
- . *Collected Poems*. London: Picador/Macmillan, 1990.
- . “Preface to Cuchulain of Muirthemne.” In *Lady Gregory’s Complete Irish Mythology* compiled by Lady Augusta Gregory, 331–36. London: Bounty, 2012.
- . *Writings on Irish Folklore, Legend and Myth*. London: Penguin, 1993.

Civil Religion as Utopian Ideology: A Case Study of H. G. Wells¹

KÁROLY PINTÉR | PÁZMÁNY PÉTER CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY, HUNGARY

The Concept of Civil Religion

Utopias have a controversial relationship with organized religions. As they are by definition seeking to present a social vision of a human community organized along significantly different rules and conventions than the author's contemporary society, they implicitly or explicitly challenge the norms and habits of existing societies, including the moral code and spiritual goals, which are predominantly influenced by the majority religion of that particular community. In other words, utopias have an inherent heterodox tendency, which renders them suspect in the eyes of religious authorities. The Catholic philosopher Thomas Molnar summarized this phenomenon succinctly when he described utopias as "perennial heresies" in relation to doctrinal orthodoxy: "The important utopian writers are heretics from the point of view of Christian doctrine; they want to restore man's original innocence—his knowledge and power—and, to achieve this objective, they want to abolish original sin and start with unspoiled beginnings."²

But heretics are also motivated by powerful religious convictions. Authors of utopias might have a disparaging view of existing churches, their doctrines, and their practices, but nonetheless their alternative fictitious communities are inevitably governed by principles that must ultimately rest on some deeply held convictions about right and wrong, about social virtues and vices. Every utopian community is ruled by a more or less

¹ This chapter was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

² Thomas Molnar, *Utopia: The Perennial Heresy* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), 20.

explicit ideology in the descriptive sense, as defined by Michael Freeden, but utopias are typically distinguished by the complete hegemony of one single ideology rather than the competition between different, rival ideologies in existing modern societies.³ In fact, imaginary utopian communities usually function as mobile demonstrations illustrating the superior virtues of one particular ideology in the total organization of social life.

In such utopian models, religion, insofar as it serves any role at all, typically assumes one overarching function: to reinforce the moral code and prescribe acceptable rules of behavior for the community. In real-life communities, religion plays a far more complex role in the lives of individuals as well as the workings of society, fulfilling a number of diverse spiritual and practical functions; however, a utopist primarily wishes to utilize religion for its integrative capacity. A religious or quasi-religious system of beliefs serving such a principal socio-political purpose is commonly described as a civil religion in social theory.

The modern understanding of civil religion was defined in the cultural context of the United States of America by sociologist Robert N. Bellah, who emphasized the distinctness of American civil religion from any of the organized religions or faiths of the country, in particular Christianity.⁴ In the recent summary of Richard Pierard, civil religion is “the operative religion of a political community—the system of rituals, symbols, values, norms, and allegiances that determines its life, invests it with meaning and a destiny, and provides it with an overarching sense of spiritual unity.”⁵ But Bellah readily admits that his idea of an American civil religion rests on the more general notion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau presented at the end of *The Social Contract*.⁶ Here, Rousseau argues that gods in ancient times were endemic to a political community (state or *polis*), and their spiritual authority was part and parcel of the internal social and moral order of that community: “each State, having its peculiar cult as well as its own form of government, did not distinguish its gods from its laws.”⁷ This situation was

³ Michael Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 32.

⁴ Robert N. Bellah, “Civil Religion in America,” *Daedalus* 96, no. 1 (1967): 5–8.

⁵ Richard V. Pierard, “The Role of Civil Religion in American Society,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Church and State in the United States*, ed. Derek H. Davis (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 480.

⁶ Bellah, “Civic Religion in America,” 5; See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, vol. 4, ed. and trans. Charles Frankel (New York: Hafner, 1947), chap. 8.

⁷ Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, 4:115–16.

radically altered by Christianity, which declared the existence of a spiritual kingdom ruled by Jesus and placed it above all existing governments, thus giving rise to ceaseless rivalries and conflicts between political leaders (kings and princes) and representatives of spiritual authority (the Pope and the clergy). In Rousseau's opinion, this is a serious political disadvantage of Christianity, as it severely restricts the political authority of governments and prevents the establishment of a good polity: "Christian law is at bottom more injurious than useful to the constitution of the State."⁸

His proposed solution is to distinguish religions according to their two fundamental social functions, "the religion of man, and the religion of the citizen."⁹ Christianity in its pure, Gospel-inspired version (liberated from the worldly ambitions of the clergy) may fulfill the former function as it is ultimately more concerned with heaven and individual salvation than with any secular political institutions. Rousseau deems it unsuitable, however, to serve as the unifying political religion of a community, because the latter should inculcate love and respect for the laws of the realm, obedience to the political leaders, and a willingness to serve the country's interests. Therefore, the smooth functioning of a state requires that "each of its citizens should have a religion which will dispose him to love his duties; but the dogmas of that religion interest neither the State nor its members except as far as they affect morality and those duties which he who professes them is required to discharge towards others." Rousseau calls this set of dogmas a "purely civil profession of faith" that should be established by the ruler of a particular country; they are not dogmas proper but rather "sentiments of sociability" guiding the citizens' public, social, and political behavior.¹⁰ Nonetheless, they should be more than mere social norms because they should command loyalty and obedience. As Rousseau writes, "The dogmas of civil religion ought to be simple, few in number, precisely fixed, and without explanation or comment. The existence of a powerful, wise, and benevolent Divinity, who foresees and provides the life to come, the happiness of the just, the punishment of the wicked, the sanctity of the social contract and the laws: these are its positive dogmas. Its negative dogmas I would confine to one—intolerance."¹¹ In Attila Károly Molnár's insightful summary, this "radical republican version of civil religion" is not satisfied with subordinating Christianity to secular political power, but

⁸ Ibid., 119.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 123.

¹¹ Ibid., 124.

wishes to replace it completely with a purely secular political religion.¹² This social creed remains entirely indifferent to the private lives and worship practices of citizens, but prescribes binding rules for their public attitudes and behaviour, including the requirement of love and devotion to their political community. “This was Rousseau’s invention, who discovered secular political religion with civil religion, and the creation of such a religion has become a favourite pastime of nineteenth- and twentieth-century intellectuals.”¹³

Rousseau’s brief sketch of the desirable civil religion as a spiritual glue to keep society intact provides a perfect blueprint for a utopian approach to religion. In fact, an excellent illustration of Rousseau’s model can be found in the very first literary utopia, Sir Thomas More’s eponymous work, in which an entire chapter of Part II is devoted to the description of the religious diversity of utopians. In the island of Utopia, people are free to follow whatever religion they prefer and even to proselytize for it without resorting to violence or the abuse of other faiths. To do so is considered a disturbance of public peace, and the perpetrators are sentenced to exile or slavery.¹⁴ King Utopus laid down only two fundamental dogmas that must not be questioned: the immortality of the soul and the existence of divine providence. Both dogmas are justified by their social utility. People tend to obey and follow the laws and norms of a community more steadfastly if they are concerned about their afterlife, if they believe that “after this life vices will be punished and virtue rewarded.”¹⁵ The narrator declares with conviction that fear of a country’s laws alone would not deter people from breaking them in order to gratify their greed; they must have fear of divine punishment and hope of a life after death. Therefore, the two fundamental dogmas of Utopia function as a foundation for the numerous other social rules and norms that are enforced with a consistent severity to preserve the particular Utopian social mold.

¹² Attila Károly Molnár, “Civil vallás,” in *Forrásvidékek: Társadalomtudományi tanulmányok Némedi Dénes 60. születésnapjára*, ed. Gábor Felkai, Attila Károly Molnár, and Eszter Pál (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2002), 217; “a civil vallás radikális republikánus változatá[nak]”; my translation.

¹³ Ibid.; “Ez Rousseau újítása, aki a civil vallással felfedezte a világi politikai vallást, amelynek megalkotása azóta a XIX-XX. századi értelmiség kedvenc foglalkoztatása lett”; my translation.

¹⁴ Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan and Robert T. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 95–99.

¹⁵ Ibid., 98.

Leland Miles was probably the first to point out the Platonic inspiration behind what he called the “minimum religion” of Utopia. In the *Republic*, and also in the *Laws*, Plato insists on recognition of the justice of God (or gods), the immortality of the soul, and divine providence (or justice) operating both in this world and the next as essential requirements of membership in an ideal community.¹⁶ The Platonic inspiration behind *Utopia* is well known and explicitly acknowledged in the prefatory material attached to the book, but Plato’s influence on Rousseau’s concept of civil religion is not often discussed in critical literature.¹⁷ Attila Károly Molnár, in his wide-ranging historical survey of the philosophical origins of civil religion, does not suppose a direct link, but claims that the Platonic concept of *homonoia*—the necessity of having a shared character, moral outlook, and way of thinking, as well as common habits, for the coherence of a social-political community—can be identified as the ultimate source of the idea of civil religion. *Homonoia* was seen both by Plato (in the *Republic*) and Aristotle (in the *Nichomachean Ethics*) as essential for social peace and stability.¹⁸ Civil religion is nothing but a deliberate tool in the hands of the political leaders or the political elite to encourage and reinforce a shared set of social, political, and ethical values and attitudes.

In the two centuries following Rousseau’s era, the most spectacularly successful forms of civil religion proved to be the varieties of modern nationalist ideologies. Elemér Hankiss, who was probably the first to discuss Bellah’s renewed version of the concept in Hungarian while also applying it in a Hungarian cultural-historical context, chose to translate it as *nemzetvallás* (nation-religion).¹⁹ He justified his decision by arguing that this particular version of an immanent religion (as opposed to tran-

¹⁶ Leland Miles, “The Platonic Source of Utopia’s ‘Minimum Religion,’” *Renaissance News* 9 (1956): 84–87, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2857482>.

¹⁷ Cf. John Gueguen’s observation that “More’s Utopia pursues a fundamental reformation of Platonic theology. It seeks in characteristically Platonic fashion, in dialogue, to disclose a new Plato, a corrected Plato.” John A. Gueguen, “Reading More’s *Utopia* as a Criticism of Plato,” in *Quincentennial Essays on Thomas More*, ed. Michael J. Moore (Boone, NC: Appalachian State University, 1978), 44. The famous prefatory poem, ostensibly written by a certain Anemolius, compares *Utopia* favourably to Plato’s *Republic* by claiming that the former is trying to compete with and even defeat the latter; for details, see Károly Pintér, *The Anatomy of Utopia: Narration, Estrangement and Ambiguity in More, Wells, Huxley and Clarke* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), 197n6.

¹⁸ Molnár, “Civil vallás,” 207–8, 210–11.

¹⁹ Elemér Hankiss, “Nemzetvallás,” in *Monumentumok az első világháborúból*, ed. Ákos Kovács (Budapest: Corvina, 1991), 66.

scendent religions that believe in and worship an invisible and omnipotent deity existing outside and beyond the empirical world) focuses on the common history and fate of a certain nation, state, or ethnic group as an object of worship and invests it with religious significance or attributes. The sacralized concept of the nation, as well as its worship via various symbolic rituals, is well known in the critical literature of civil religion. Donald Jones and Russell Richey, in an attempt to provide a typology of civil religion, distinguish both the “transcendental universal religion of the nation”—essentially Bellah’s understanding of the concept—and “religious nationalism” or “the religion of patriotism.”²⁰ It is the latter meaning that corresponds to Hankiss’s understanding, in which the nation is “the object of adoration and glorification.”²¹ The second half of the nineteenth century saw the establishment of free and compulsory public school systems all over Europe and the Western world. These proved particularly effective in propagating the religion of patriotism, the mobilizing potential of which was utilized to tragic and terrible effect during the conflagration of the two world wars.

Civil Religion in the Utopian Works of H. G. Wells

Krishan Kumar observes that “after 1870 a spate of utopias poured fourth” in Britain.²² Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century utopists all over Europe and the US were faced with two overwhelming social realities. On the one hand, their societies underwent rapid transformation due to the advance of natural sciences, the impact of the industrial revolution, and the economic supremacy of free-market capitalism; on the other hand, the dominance of nationalist civil religions both glorified the *status quo* and generated rivalries and mutual distrust among nations. Utopian responses to these realities typically gravitated toward the most popular contemporary alternative: the socialist utopia, which would destroy national divisions by uniting humanity under one government (or make national governments mutually supportive and tolerant of one another) and elimi-

²⁰ Donald G. Jones and Russell E. Richey, “The Civil Religion Debate,” in *American Civil Religion*, ed. Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 15–16.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

²² Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 65.

nate the ills of private property and *laissez-faire* capitalism by substituting it with some combination of collective ownership and central planning. Kumar argues that “socialism was the nineteenth-century utopia, the truly modern utopia, *par excellence*,” but that by the end of the century, it was becoming a religion in its own right:

Just as the belief of the early Christians in the imminence of the Second Coming gave way to the indefinite expectation of the Augustinian Church, so the socialists of the 1880s came to place their faith in the Party and the Movement as the vehicles of regeneration in some distant future. The fervency of belief remained, but the concrete goal was displaced to a remote time which none could predict. The language of socialism became correspondingly consolatory and inspirational, couched in the terms and tones of traditional religion.²³

A key influence on a number of English socialists was a curious book, *The Martyrdom of Man* (1872), by William Winwood Reade, who adapted Darwinism for his evolutionary vision of the unceasing progress of humanity toward a bright future. Leon Stover convincingly argues that Reade’s views made a more powerful and lasting impact on H. G. Wells than those of his revered former professor, T. H. Huxley.²⁴ As “Wells was arguably . . . the first writer in the canon of English Literature to have been trained as a pure scientist,” he shared Reade’s conviction that science provided the key to mastery over nature, thus leading to the elevation of humanity to new levels of knowledge and power, and also to a new moral quality.²⁵ However, both Reade and Wells also saw a tragic potential in human evolution if it were to be left to follow its own course blindly, wasting its resources on various struggles and wars. Such dangers could only be overcome by a self-conscious, sustained, and united effort of the race.

With such a core conviction, Wells occupies a key position in the utopian tradition straddling two radically different epochs: the nineteenth-century optimistic spirit believing in scientific progress and the unbridled

²³ Ibid., 49, 66.

²⁴ Leon Stover, “Applied Natural History: Wells vs. Huxley,” In *H. G. Wells Under Revision: Proceedings of the International H. G. Wells Symposium, London, July 1986*, ed. Patrick Parrinder and Christopher Rolfe (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990), 127–30.

²⁵ Simon J. James, *Maps of Utopia: H. G. Wells, Modernity, and the End of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 13.

potential of the future development of humankind on the one hand, and the anxious, fretful atmosphere of the post-1918 period on the other, in which the future was suddenly transformed into a vague, looming threat full of dangerous possibilities. In Patrick Parrinder's pithy summary, "He was the first of the futurologists as well as the last of the nineteenth-century prophets."²⁶

Wells clearly saw both sides of the evolutionary coin from the start, as he demonstrated spectacularly in his very first piece of fiction, *The Time Machine* (1895). Taking place in the far future, the Time Traveller is confronted with the degenerate descendants of humanity and comes to the speculative conviction that the decline followed the achievement of complete mastery over nature, since it deprived humanity of the challenges and intellectual stimulation necessary for further evolutionary progress. This duality is repeated with some regularity in his *oeuvre*, as he produced not only a number of utopian, but also several dystopian works during his long and productive career. The evolutionary pessimism metaphorically present in such books as *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896) and *The First Men in the Moon* (1901), or rendered in an explicitly dystopian form in *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899), is counterbalanced by such ultimately optimistic scenarios as *The World Set Free* (1914) or *Men Like Gods* (1923).

A self-avowed socialist who nonetheless rejected the Marxist tenets of the inevitable class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat, Wells displayed a characteristically acute perception of the need for a shared utopian ethic and faith to displace the "traditional" narrow loyalties to king and country. Already in his first fictional utopian work, *A Modern Utopia* (1905)—the only formal utopia of his entire career, as Kumar notes²⁷—he imagines a particular kind of "voluntary nobility" for the management of the World State.²⁸ Named the Samurai, the group is explicitly modelled on Plato's class of guardians in the *Republic*. The Samurai have emerged not as a spontaneous development, but as a "quite deliberate invention," a worldwide organization open to anybody who submits to living by the Rule, which is described as consisting of three parts: "the list of things that qualify, the list of things that must not be

²⁶ Patrick Parrinder, "Experiments in Prophecy," in Parrinder and Rolfe, *H. G. Wells Under Revision*, 7.

²⁷ Krishan Kumar, Introduction to *A Modern Utopia*, by H. G. Wells (London: Dent, 1994), xxxiii.

²⁸ H. G. Wells, *A Modern Utopia* (London: Dent, 1994), 153.

done, and the list of things that must be done”—in short, a comprehensive moral code.²⁹ Its general aim is characterized “to exclude the dull and base altogether, to discipline the impulses and emotions, to develop a moral habit and sustain a man in periods of stress, fatigue, and temptation, to produce the maximum co-operation of all men of good intent, and, in fact, to keep all the *samurai* in a state of moral and bodily health and efficiency.”³⁰

Initially, *A Modern Utopia* describes neither the Samurai nor their Rule explicitly as a religious organization or a religious dogma, but both the nomenclature (for instance, order, Greater and Lesser Rule, the Book of the Samurai, the First and Second Canon, etc.) and the rather long list of requirements and forbidden activities unmistakably evoke the atmosphere of a religious society, such as that of Christian or Buddhist monks. In section 7 of chapter IX the narrative turns to the details of the underlying Utopian religion that motivates the Samurai. This religion rejects the doctrine of original sin: Utopians believe that humans are inherently good (thus reinforcing one of the fundamental claims of Thomas Molnar about the theological preconceptions of utopists)³¹ and that they possess a natural religious impulse, which is perverted by traditional religious organizations and exercises. The Samurai believe that God is transcendental and mystical, and that religion should be a private affair between the individual and God, without the intercession of any priesthood. The Samurai worship this God in private ways, particularly with an annual exercise of departing from their own familiar world and making a solitary weeklong journey into a remote and wild part of Earth with only minimal equipment and supplies. However, as the narrator remarks, “with these things the Rule of the order will have nothing to do.”³²

Thus, *A Modern Utopia* presents a similar duality of private, personal religion and public, civil faith which Rousseau would readily approve of. The Samurai voluntarily devote themselves to public service and the maintenance of the World State by following an established, written code of conduct, while they privately worship a complex and abstract God; the latter provides emotional, spiritual, and moral inspiration for the former, but the “civil religion” of the Samurai does not have a direct relationship with their transcendental beliefs, and their Rule contains no prescribed

²⁹ Ibid., 154, 166.

³⁰ Ibid., 165.

³¹ See Molnar, *Utopia*, 20.

³² Wells, *A Modern Utopia*, 178.

religious doctrines or activities. Private religion and public moral code are sharply segregated, and from the point of view of a utopian society, it is the content and impact of the latter that matters.

The idea of an internationalist civil religion to combat the negative effects of nationalism grew in importance in Wells's thinking after he witnessed the carnage of the Great War, which he saw as clear evidence for his pessimistic assessment of the future prospects of human civilization. As Simon James sums up, "Wells's political and historical writing repeatedly insists on mankind's common biological origin making a nonsense of nationhood as an essential property. . . . For world peace to prevent any war occurring again in the future, patriotism and the nation state also have to be outgrown."³³

As a result, more than two decades after *A Modern Utopia*, Wells revived the idea of a worldwide voluntary elite in a manifesto entitled *The Open Conspiracy* (1928). In this non-fiction volume of related essays he essentially argued for the inevitability of the emergence of the World State (the same vision that underlay *A Modern Utopia*) and called for the formation of an international movement of enlightened and selfless individuals for its realization. In other words, he attempted to write the manifesto for an emerging Samurai order, now calling the same group "Open Conspirators."

Whether such a scheme had any practicability is beyond my current inquiry; what interests me is the way Wells attempts to justify the need for the Open Conspiracy. His starting point is an interpretation of the role of religion in human societies. In Chapters I to IV, he opens his essay by claiming that religion is necessary for the survival of any human community. To justify this claim, he uses the same utilitarian arguments as those employed by Rousseau: "Without it [religion] morality was baseless and law unjustifiable. . . . No community seems ever to have been held together in wholesome and vigorous collective life by 'enlightened self-interest' alone. . . . A community where binding beliefs have decayed altogether is like a building whose mortar has been changed to sand. It may stand for a time, but it stands precariously."³⁴ Starting from this axiomatic observation, he goes on to observe that in modern Western societies the influence of religion and the vigor of religious beliefs have been seriously

³³ James, *Maps of Utopia*, 165.

³⁴ H. G. Wells, *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution* (London: Gollancz, 1928), 12–13.

weakened by the advance of scientific knowledge and industrialization, the emergence of the modern international economy, and the decline of governmental authority due to the circulation of heterodox ideas, criticisms, and doubts. He foresees a coming period of social disintegration, and—with a characteristically Wellsian prophetic gesture—presents his manifesto as an effective antidote to combat the looming chaos.

In his perception, all religions share certain essential features, such as the subordination of the individual self to the collective interests of the community in the name of some higher power: “a divinity, a divine order, a standard, a righteousness.”³⁵ All religions must also contain some kind of hope or promise in the form of an objective that motivates followers and persuades them to neglect purely selfish concerns in favor of collective goals. Furthermore, Wells claims that a significant minority of humanity has an inherent motivation to follow such objectives and shun mundane pleasures and problems in favor of a higher goal: “The desire to give oneself to greater ends than the everyday life affords, and to give oneself freely, is clearly dominant in that minority and traceable in an incalculable proportion of the majority.”³⁶

Based on these assumptions, he presents his blueprint for a new religion. He singles out three aspects of a traditional religious outlook that have become obsolete with new psychological and biological discoveries about humans:

- The concept of sin and our attitudes to sin have been transformed by the recognition that most of our human motives have deep-seated biological roots: “Our former sins are seen as ignorances, inadequacies and bad habits, and the moral conflict is robbed of three-fourth of its ego-centred melodramatic quality. We are no longer moved to be less wicked; we are moved to organize our conditioned reflexes and lead a life less fragmentary and silly.”³⁷
- The concept of individuality as the measure of all things has been challenged by the laws of evolutionary development: “We begin to realize that we are egotists by misapprehension. Nature cheats the self to serve the purposes of the species by filling it with wants that war against its private interests.”³⁸

³⁵ Ibid., 17.

³⁶ Ibid., 18.

³⁷ Ibid., 22–23.

³⁸ Ibid., 23.

- The reorientation of human attitudes from the past toward the future questions the absolute authority of religious worldviews, including the influence of the past over our future: “The history of our world, which has been unfolded to us by science, runs counter to all the histories on which religions have been based. There was no Creation in the past, we begin to realize, but eternally there is creation; there was no Fall to account for the conflict of good and evil, but a stormy ascent. Life as we know it is a mere beginning.”³⁹

In summary, he pronounces the bold judgement that religions should be stripped of all their vestiges of sacred history and posthumous personal ambitions. Instead, their shared essence should be highlighted: “The desire for service, for subordination, for permanent effect, for an escape from the distressful pettiness and mortality of the individual life, is the undying element in every religious system. . . . The first sentence in the modern creed must be, not ‘I believe’ but ‘I give myself.’”⁴⁰ Thus he arrives at the conclusion that the only worthy objective for what he considers a modern religious attitude is to strive for a “conceivable better order in human affairs” than the present one. In order to eliminate war with all its evils and to create worldwide prosperity and well-being, a politically, socially, and economically unified World State must be brought about. The rest of the book is devoted to discussing how such a project could be realized by a voluntary cooperation of enlightened and unselfish individuals, a peaceful but nonetheless revolutionary venture he calls the Open Conspiracy.

I have summarized Wells’s views on “modern religion” at length because they provide a particularly striking attempt at establishing (or at least proposing) an internationalist civil religion in the Rousseauian mold. Wells approaches religion with the appraising eye of a natural scientist, disregarding any spiritual or mystical elements of religious faith, and his functional method is predominantly interested in the use of religion rather than its meaning. In a sense, his analysis is a self-fulfilling prophecy: since he has stated as an axiom that religion is essential to a smoothly functioning, stable, and prosperous society, it is small surprise that his reasoning ultimately arrives at the conclusion that the desirable worldwide commonwealth of the future can only be brought about through the voluntary association and cooperation of individuals who have a religious devotion to

³⁹ Ibid., 24.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 24–25.

such a worthy objective. Although he talks about the “essence of religion,” he is more interested in the social benefits of religion. In *The Open Conspiracy*, he attempts to sketch up a rudimentary civil faith for the righteous who are willing to devote themselves to the World State.

In one crucial aspect, however, Wells departs from the model of Rousseau as well as from his own fictitious description of the Samurai two decades earlier. In *The Open Conspiracy* there is no duality between public and private faith. In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells still allowed for a private, individualistic, and mystical religion, a strange combination of pantheism and Protestant devotion strictly divorced from the moral code of the Samurai. In his later book, however, he refuses to make such a concession. On the contrary, he gently urges his readers to give up the idea of an individuated, anthropomorphic deity as the last vestige of an outdated concept: “The word ‘God’ is in most minds so associated with the concept of religion that it is abandoned only with the greatest reluctance. The word remains though the idea is continually attenuated. He is pushed farther and farther from actuality and His definition becomes increasingly a bundle of negations, until at last, in His role of The Absolute, He becomes an entirely negative expression.”⁴¹ Although Wells refrains from a categorical statement, his position is made sufficiently clear: the traditional, personalized concept of God, “a God still anthropomorphic enough to have a will and purpose, to display preferences and reciprocate emotions,” should be relinquished in light of modern knowledge of the world and ourselves.⁴² Therefore, his advocacy of the building of the World State as a new object of devotion is not merely a proposal for a worldwide civil religion. Rather, it is a substitute religion for the Open Conspirators, those enlightened few who are able to recognize that “the essential fact in religion is the desire for religion.”⁴³ Utopian religion no longer tolerates rival sects or deities; the utopian project itself should become the sole object of devotion in order to help fulfill its own stated purpose—the integration and individuals and their motivation toward a concerted effort: “Religion, modern and disillusioned, has for its outward task to set itself to the control and direction of political, social and economic life.”⁴⁴ The heretic comes full circle by not only challenging fundamental theological tenets, but also banishing God from the future promised land.

⁴¹ Ibid., 21.

⁴² Ibid., 20.

⁴³ Ibid., 24.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 30.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bellah, Robert N. "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus* 96, no. 1 (1967): 1–21.
- Freeden, Michael. *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gueguen, John A. "Reading More's *Utopia* as a Criticism of Plato." In *Quincentennial Essays on Thomas More*, edited by Michael J. Moore, 43–54. Boone, NC: Appalachian State University, 1978.
- Hankiss, Elemér. "Nemzetvallás." In *Monumentumok az első világháborúból*, edited by Ákos Kovács, 64–90. Budapest: Corvina, 1991.
- James, Simon J. *Maps of Utopia: H. G. Wells, Modernity, and the End of Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Jones, Donald G., and Russell E. Richey. "The Civil Religion Debate." In *American Civil Religion*, edited by Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones, 3–18. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- Kumar, Krishan. "Introduction." In H. G. Wells, *A Modern Utopia*, xxxi–xliii. London: Dent, 1994.
- Kumar, Krishan. *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987.
- Miles, Leland. "The Platonic Source of Utopia's 'Minimum Religion'." *Renaissance News* 9 (1956): 83–90. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2857482>
- Molnar, Thomas. *Utopia: The Perennial Heresy*. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967.
- Molnár, Attila Károly. "Civil vallás" [Civil religion]. In *Forrásvidékek: Társadalomtudományi tanulmányok Némedi Dénes 60. születésnapjára*, edited by Gábor Felkai, Attila Károly Molnár and Eszter Pál, 205–49. Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2002.
- More, Sir Thomas. *Utopia*. Edited by George M. Logan and Robert T. Adams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Parrinder, Patrick. "Experiments in Prophecy." In *H. G. Wells Under Revision: Proceedings of the International H. G. Wells Symposium, London, July 1986*, edited by Patrick Parrinder and Christopher Rolfe, 7–21. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990.
- Pierard, Richard V. "The Role of Civil Religion in American Society." In *The Oxford Handbook of Church and State in the United States*, edited by Derek H. Davis, 479–96. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Pintér, Károly. *The Anatomy of Utopia: Narration, Estrangement and Ambiguity in More, Wells, Huxley and Clarke*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010.
- Reade, William Winwood. *The Martyrdom of Man*. London: Trübner, 1872.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract*. Translation revised and edited by Charles Frankel. New York: Hafner, 1947.
- Stover, Leon. "Applied Natural History: Wells vs. Huxley." In *H. G. Wells Under Revision: Proceedings of the International H. G. Wells Symposium, London, July 1986*, edited by Patrick Parrinder and Christopher Rolfe, 125–33. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990.
- Wells, H. G. *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Edited by Patrick Parrinder. London: Penguin, 2005.

-
- . *The First Men in the Moon*. Edited by Patrick Parrinder. London: Penguin, 2005.
- . *A Modern Utopia*. London: Dent, 1994.
- . *Men Like Gods*. Wildside Press, 2009.
- . *The Open Conspiracy: Blue Prints for a World Revolution*. London: Gollancz, 1928.
- . *The Sleeper Awakes*. Edited by Patrick Parrinder. London: Penguin, 2005.
- . *The Time Machine*. Edited by Patrick Parrinder. London: Penguin, 2005.
- . *The World Set Free*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1988.

Negative Utopia in Central Europe: *Kazohinia* and the Dystopian Political Climate of the 1930s

ZSOLT CZIGÁNYIK | EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY
AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST

There is a curious book that keeps causing discomfort to its readers: *A Voyage to Kazohinia*, written in or around 1935 and first published in 1941, is often considered the single most important book of the Hungarian utopian (and dystopian) tradition. As part of a larger project of mapping Hungarian utopianism from a social and political perspective, this chapter analyzes this book of central importance by displaying its textual and structural parallels with contemporary political ideologies, especially nationalism, fascism, and anarchism.¹

Kazohinia's author, Sándor Szathmári (1897–1974), was not a professional writer, but a mechanical engineer, like Yevgeny Zamyatin (1884–1937), the author of *We* (Мы, 1924), a book that is usually considered the first proper twentieth-century dystopian novel. Szathmári's other writings include *Gépvilág* (Machine world, 1972), a collection of short stories of uneven quality, and a posthumously published dystopian novel, *Hiába* (In vain), written in the 1930s. Szathmári worked in the shade of totalitarian movements. (He also flirted with them in his early radical publications and as a member and secretary of the Bartha Miklós Society.)² Yet I do not mean to suggest that the ideologies discussed below and especially the

¹ The book project and this chapter was made possible by the grant and intellectual climate I enjoyed during 2013 and 2014 as Humanities Initiative Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Central European University, Budapest.

² Cf. Éva Tófalvy, "Gyulától Kazohiniáig" [From the town of Gyula to Kazohinia], *Bárka* 10, no. 1 (2012): 88–93; and, József Tasi, "Hiába. Szathmári Sándorral beszélget Tasi József" [In vain: Sándor Szathmári talks to József Tasi], *Lyukasóra* 9 (1994): 21–23.

sources quoted had a direct influence on the composition of *Kazohinia*, though in some cases the opposite cannot be proven either. The endeavor of this paper is rather to highlight ideological parallels with the notions of a literary dystopia. This is in line with Howard Segal's argument that "utopianism functions like a microscope: by first isolating then magnifying aspects of existing, non-utopian societies allegedly needing drastic improvements, it enables us to see more clearly their political, economic, cultural and psychological mainstreams."³

The delay in the first publication of *Kazohinia* was due to censorship, and for the same reason the first edition was somewhat abridged, as especially the negative remarks on fascist Italy had to be erased. Since its first publication, no less than seven other editions have appeared in Hungarian to date (not counting an audiobook version in 2008); an Esperanto edition appeared in 1958, an English translation by Inez Kemenes was published in Hungary,⁴ and a revised edition of this latter translation was also published in 2012 in the US. This short publication history shows that the book cannot be considered unknown; indeed, it ranks among some curiously popular books in Hungary. On the other hand, many have questioned its literary merits, and the book is scarcely known amongst the younger generations according to my non-representative research. Its international fame is also most limited. Despite its fairly high rate of reissue, the reading public seems to be unable to digest it, and the canonical status of this book—just like the whole of Hungarian utopian tradition—remains dubious.

Kazohinia purports to be a sequel of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* of 1726. This is not an uncommon approach in Hungarian literature, nor in the literature of some other nations—a separate genre of *gulliveriad* had to be established due to the great number of imitations of Swift's work. Szathmári's iconic literary model, the Hungarian writer, poet, and translator Frigyes Karinthy (1887–1938), published two similar books in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.⁵ Karinthy's *Farecido* (1916) and *Capillaria* (1921) had a decisive influence on Szathmári, and

³ Howard Segal, *Utopias: A Brief History from Ancient Writings to Virtual Communities*. (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), xi.

⁴ Available online at <http://www.kevius.com/kazohinia/>.

⁵ Karinthy praised Szathmári's work in superlative terms when he saw it in manuscript form. It is claimed he said that he envied Szathmári for this book and that he would have given his own two gulliveriads in return for *Kazohinia*. Cf. Tasi, "Hiába," 22.

altogether they constitute the beginning of the Hungarian dystopian tradition. Gabriella Hartvig refers to this phenomenon as the “creative reception of Swift, [which] may be characterised as an *amalgam* of Wellsian science fiction and utopian literature as represented, above all, by *Gulliver’s Travels*. . . . *Faremido* and *Capillaria* give a futuristic and philosophical overtone to . . . Swift’s heritage. This in turn becomes highly politicized in the interwar period in Sándor Szathmári’s *Kazohinia*.”⁶

Although pursuing the interesting literary connections and influences would lead us astray from the topic of the political aspects of Szathmári’s work, Swift’s excessively rational creatures, the Houyhnhnms, and their passionate and irrational counterparts, the Yahoos, must be remembered as interpretive models of the dystopian duality of *hins* and *behins* in *Kazohinia*. Both works highlight a great paradox of the enlightenment: the rule of rationality leads to an inhuman world at its extreme. Both the Houyhnhnms and the *Hins* demonstrate this allegation.

The structure of *Gulliver’s Travels* is well known. The narrator-protagonist embarks on a voyage, his ship sinks, and he alone miraculously survives the accident. After reaching the shore of a yet unknown island, he finds an extraordinary civilization, learns its language with amazing speed, and discovers the details of this yet unknown world. The very same structure is followed in *Kazohinia*. Although it is the first two voyages of Gulliver—one to Lilliput and one to Brobdingnag, the land of the giants—that are the best remembered, the fourth book is the one that is most relevant with respect to *Kazohinia*. In this book, Gulliver reaches the land of the Houyhnhnms, the horses. Their world is inhabited by two different creatures: besides the ultimately rational horses, in whose world passions and emotions do not exist, there are the abominable, hairy, ape-like Yahoos, who are exactly the opposite of the Houyhnhnms in being utterly irrational and selfish. The Houyhnhnms’ peace is not even disturbed by such tragedies as the deaths of their closest relatives; these are considered natural occurrences, and no pretext for spoiling a social gathering. For instance, at a tea party, a freshly widowed mare behaves “as cheerfully as the rest,” “expressing neither joy nor grief” at the departure of her husband, and excuses herself for being late as the funeral procedure took too long, her husband not having been sensible enough to die a

⁶ Gabriella Hartvig, “Hungarian Gulliveriads,” in *The Critical and Creative Reception of Eighteenth-Century British and Anglo-Irish Authors in Hungary* (Pécs: University of Pécs, 2013), 38.

little earlier so that his wife were not late for the party.⁷ The Houyhnhnms' world on the surface seems an ideal, enlightened, rational utopia where the passions and the diverging wills of the individuals do not trouble the harmony of society, and this view is supported by the narrator's approach. Individual persons do not exist in this world; there are no proper names and single individuals live in perfect fusion with the larger community. In fact this lack of individuality may well be seen as the basis of a dystopian duality or a split in human personality, a split that developed into an almost commonplace pattern in twentieth-century dystopian literature. The fake utopianism of the purely rational life turns into dystopia when it is realized that human existence involves other aspects beside the rational or intellectual, namely the emotive or symbolical. The fact that humans transcend the intellectual sphere of existence is an important lesson that can be drawn from the analysis of dystopian structures and is particularly relevant for *Kazohinia*, as it shall soon be demonstrated.

A dual perspective of human nature is also present in *Kazohinia*. In this book there are two species: the pragmatically rational Hins (embodiments of positivism) replace Swift's horses, and the utterly irrational Behins can be equated to the Yahoos. As in *Gulliver's Travels*, it is not a matter of course whether a certain alternative reality, a so-to-say utopia, is necessarily better than the world of departure with which we make a comparison. Thomas More's original pun (utopia or eutopia) already involves ambiguity and suggests a certain insecurity in interpretation. Gulliver's fourth voyage (and the debates it has inspired ever since) imply that this ambiguity cannot be cleared away—whether we read a positive or a negative utopia depends a great deal upon the interpreter. The same notion applies to Gulliver's alleged twentieth-century journey to Kazohinia, the journey we shall now look at in more detail.

Plot Overview

Similarly to the pattern established in Swift's book, Gulliver arrives after a shipwreck at the hitherto unknown land of Kazohinia. Travelling through their city, he marvels at their technologically highly developed circumstances: "Two- and three-story houses followed, all in a style similar to what I had seen in the paddies. At first I admired them, but later the

⁷ Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (London: Penguin, 1994), 303–4.

monotony and lack of ornamentation made me feel that something was lacking. . . . But what surprised me most of all was that the countless people, whether on foot or traveling by car or train, were all very similar to each other; and their attire, too, was almost uniform.”⁸ Fascinated by the inhabitants’ technological precision, yet somewhat bothered by their lack of beauty and the identical clothes and houses, Gulliver learns that he has arrived in the land of plenty and harmony, where everything is provided to the inhabitants for free, everyone does a non-excruciating job, and people help each other in need, but otherwise do not care for others. People do not chat or concern themselves with art or entertainment, and they live isolated lives; they do not contact each other except when the other is in need. State structures are not only invisible, but nonexistent—practically no force or coercion is employed. The lives of the Hins, the inhabitants of Kazohinia, are governed by a principle called *kazo* that they follow automatically. Despite his early admiration and serious efforts on his part, Gulliver cannot integrate into this society, as he finds their way of life excruciatingly boring and meaningless. Therefore, when he learns about the existence of an enclave of deviants called Behins, he enters their world.

This adventure becomes a nightmare as he finds a world that resembles a lunatic asylum without doctors. Crazy rituals and irrational concepts govern the life of the Behins, who are depicted very much in a caricatured way of contemporary Central European culture. Gulliver may be stabbed if he claims that rectangles are better than circles (or the other way around), and one should not mention food but talk of spirituality that relieves hunger, to mention only a few examples.⁹

Finally, Gulliver manages to escape both the land of Behins and Hins, is rescued by a ship, and leaves for Europe where, after experiencing these abnormalities, in the coming war he “will be happy to sacrifice his life for these ideals and this flag, for even if all of us should die, Great Britain and her ideals will live forever!”¹⁰

Kazohinia is an economical reading, two books in one, as it includes the description of two fictional worlds: the one of the ultimately positivist Hins, a critical utopia that turns out to be a dystopia, and the dystopian world of the ultimately ritualistic Behins, in the form of a not-so-mild satire of European culture. This structure is also in line with Krishan Kumar’s statement

⁸ Sándor Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, trans. Inez Kemenes (North Adams, Mass.: New Europe Books, 2012), 22.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 179, 186.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 350

claiming that “utopia carried the function of anti-utopia as well: it presented the writer’s world negatively, as an anti-utopia, to which utopia is the constructive positive response.”¹¹ The dual structure of *Kazohinia* also appears to be a manifestation of Gregory Claeys’s statement about the difference between utopia and dystopia being much smaller than what is often assumed when the two ideas are juxtaposed.¹² *Kazohinia* makes the structural parallels of utopia and dystopia explicit. Simplified human beings live in harmony in this world, which exemplifies an inherent contradiction of all static utopian structures: a world of perfect, unchanging harmony, a world in which there is no conflict, no struggle, and not even effort expended, is, at least metaphorically, a world of death. As Peter Firchow notes, “Utopia satisfies simultaneously our longing for a perfect place and for stasis, and horrifies us because we realize that the ideal approximation of rest and stability is death. Hence all utopias are also and always dystopias, and vice-versa.”¹³

Transcendence of Symbolism

The most striking feature in this strictly positivistic and utilitarian society, as in many similar structures in twentieth-century dystopian literature and film, is the lack of apparent emotions.¹⁴ Even more, abstract notions (including a sense of the past), symbols, non-referential and symbolizing language, and any form of transcendence are also absent from this world.¹⁵ The concept of emotions is usually referred to as a contrary phenomenon to the excess of pure rationality, but I shall suggest that we apply the notion of the *symbol* to emphasize the necessity of transcending the intellect when considering humans. According to the widespread dictionary definition, a symbol is something that stands for something else.¹⁶ Yet this

¹¹ Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 124.

¹² Gregory Claeys, “News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia,” *History* 98 (April 2013): 160.

¹³ Peter Firchow, *The End of Utopia* (London: Associated University Presses, 1984), 84.

¹⁴ Symptoms of emotions such as tears are seen as pathological in *Kazohinia*. See Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 30.

¹⁵ The ultimate empiricism of *Kazohinia* does not allow the existence of anything that is not directly experienced.

¹⁶ Cf. definitions in www.dictionary.com, www.thefreedictionary.com, or practically any printed dictionary.

definition is indeed disappointing and suggests the need for a more utilitarian principle. Erich Fromm links the fullness of human experience to symbols when he claims that symbolic language “is language in which we express inner experience as if it were a sensory experience. . . . The world outside is a symbol of the world inside.”¹⁷ Theodore Thass-Thienemann, basing his argument on Freud’s analysis, claims in his recently rediscovered classic *Symbolic Behavior* that symbolic language and behavior are crucial in understanding human nature, as symbols are the language of the subconscious.¹⁸ Emphasis is laid on the symbolizing power of the mind, a dynamic power that stems in the *Id*. Thus, man is “basically *bilingual*: one language is the elaboration of the conscious Ego; the other is the forgotten language, a repressed language, the outflow of the *Id*.”¹⁹ Thienemann claims that symbols are a crucial aspect of human beings: “man is the ‘symbolic animal’ (*animal symbolicum*); the creation of symbols is a fundamental activity of the sound human mind. Not only the lowest, but also the highest mental activities of man are symbolic.”²⁰ Man is not limited to the physical reality, but transcends it into the dimension of its symbolic representation. This essentially human transcendence is missing in the Kazohinian world of Hins. The ultimate pragmatism and positivism of this fictional world demonstrates that pure intellect is not the maxim of humanity. The simplified Hins do not show the full features of humanity, and social structures that requires such simplifications are alien from human beings as we know them.

The *past* is also an alien concept to the hins, and hence considered nonexistent. In the library, when Gulliver asks for books on history, the librarian “was surprised at my speaking about the past as if it were something that existed . . . but this word in itself implies that it no longer does. What is the sense in dealing with imaginary things? It is only the real, the *present*, that is, and if into the bargain you deal with nonexistent things,

¹⁷ Erich Fromm, *The Forgotten Language* (New York: Open Road 2013).

¹⁸ See Theodore Thass-Thienemann, *Symbolic Behavior* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1968).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14. This repression is complete in Kazohinia, where such complexity of the personality is seen as nonexistent. For further reading on language in dystopias see Zsolt Czigányik, “Zippers and Freedom: Discourses of Sexuality in *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*,” in *CrosSections*, ed. Andrew C. Rouse et al. (Pécs: University of Pécs, 2010): 97–106.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 8

why do you spend so much unnecessary work precisely on the past? In the same way you could also make maps on nonexistent planets.”²¹

The lack of a past is a common feature in negative utopias. For instance, compare George Orwell’s *1984*, where the existence of the past is not denied, but made completely fluid by the party changing representations of the past through constant interventions into written documents, photos, newspapers, and even people’s individual memories. With the elimination of the past in Kazohinia, life is seen as a constant present, hence the individual lacks a self-conception as an agent with a history or purposes for the future. The ahistorical approach of Kazohinia denies the existence of distinctively human capacities and a human self-conception, and of an individual identity that carries from the past through the present into the future—a prerequisite for the fusion of the individual and society.²²

If the world of the Hins is to be seen as a possible future for humanity, it implies that the advancement of technology, and increasing human dependence upon it, could lead to social transformation resulting in a world inhabited by curtailed persons. Kazohinia thus becomes a manifestation of the feature that Max Horkheimer calls “the dogmatism of the positivists.”²³ Scientific and humanistic cultures do not intersect each other, but rather a sharp split appears between them: “It must be observed here that the division of all human truth into science and humanities is itself a social product. . . . The physical sciences are endowed with so-called objectivity, but emptied of human content.”²⁴ This emptiness creates Kazohinia, the world of the Hins, but the other world of the narrative, the Behin enclave, offers no solution either.

²¹ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 69. Besides the comical effect this statement might make, the denial of the past adds to the earlier mentioned feeling of deathlike stasis. As Gulliver argues, “What is life if not the difference between yesterday and today, and expecting something of tomorrow? To stop is to die” (Ibid., 122).

²² For further reading, especially the of the “first-person perspective,” see Lynne Baker, *Persons and Bodies: A Constitution View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²³ Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004), 52. A detailed treatment of the dangers of splitting human culture is found in C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁴ Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 51–52.

Behins: The Opposite of Positivism

In the world of the Behins (deviants banned from Kazohinia) the symbolizing power of language is pushed to the extremes, severing it from referentiality completely. Gulliver does not know the cultural code to these symbols and rituals, which to him seem simply ridiculous. When meeting, they say *prick-pruck* and scratch each other's posterior. This seems absurd, but only because we use different codes—shaking hands, for instance. Another example of the humorous effects of these undeciphered codes occurs upon the arrival of a strange creature with copper cubes attached to his legs: "My acquaintance suddenly jumped up, lifted his right foot with one hand and with a painful face he wailed toward him: '*Vake! Vake!*' The man stopped, with an infinitely grave grimace shook the copper cubes on his legs, and asked, now with a smile: 'How does your nose grow, *kaleb?*'"²⁵ This is enough for us to see that satire is pushed to absurdity; the complex and nonreferential symbolism of Behin communication may be considered as a reaction to the ultimate rationality of the Hins, but one that offers no viable option to Gulliver, the representative of humanity.

The world of the Hins and that of the Behins form a binary opposition, and the treatment of the Behins by the Hins (representing the majority of this society) follows colonial patterns.²⁶ Colonialism, as Margaret Kohn argues, is a "practice that helps define Europe by creating a stable depiction of its other, its constitutive outside. Orientalism is a way of characterizing Europe by drawing a contrasting image or idea, based on a series of binary oppositions (rational/irrational, mind/body, order/chaos)."²⁷ Or as Edward Said claims, "the whole question of imperialism, as it was debated in the late nineteenth century by pro-imperialists and anti-imperialists alike, carried forward the binary typology of advanced and backward (or subject) races, cultures, and societies."²⁸ The same

²⁵ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 174.

²⁶ I owe thanks to my students at the Department of Political Science of the Central European University for drawing my attention to this parallel.

²⁷ Cf. Margaret Kohn, "Colonialism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford University, Spring 2014 Edition. Article published May 9, 2006; revised April 10, 2012., <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/colonialism/>.

²⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 206. The other side of the coin is that this discourse makes the colonialized experience themselves as "other." Cf. Kerstin Knopf, introduction to *Aboriginal Canada Revisited* (Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press), 2–27.

binary oppositions appear in the discourse on the Behins by the Hins (and later by Gulliver) that finally leads to a lethal attack on the Behins that ends in the deaths of hundreds of them. The Hins' discourse on the Behins features misunderstandings, contempt, the lack of attempts at understanding, and seeing the other as less developed or uncivilized. These are all elements of a colonial discourse that reproduces a logic of subordination, which in the case of Behins is intensified by medical terminology. The Behins' behavior, alongside with all emotions and the use of symbolic language, is seen as a malfunction of the mind, as Gulliver's tutor explains to him: "Today we are experimenting with a cure, but the whole brain must be removed in the process, and as this is very dangerous, it has not yet been tried out on human beings. So for the time being, we cannot do too much for the poor fellows, only leave them alone and see to it that they should not be in want of anything."²⁹ This last statement, despite all the contempt coded in it, suggests a humanistic attitude, but later it turns out that the Behins are not considered human, but rather a reversion to an earlier state in evolution: "We consider the behins a completely different species. . . . A reversion to the disharmony of primitive conditions. . . . An obsolete, superseded species."³⁰ This explains how (despite their generally benevolent isolation) a genocide of Behins could be carried out and considered *kazo*, or, in other words, compliant with the laws of nature. The dilemma that the Hins face in Szathmári's book is identical to the one Swift's Houyhnhnms have to consider when they argue about the extermination of the Yahoos.³¹ This tension is (at least since Swift) a recurring pattern in dystopian fiction in which the intellect is considered superior to the emotive side of humans.

Having defined the relationship of the Hins and Behins in terms of a colonialism that reinforces the Hins' superiority, in the following I would like to concentrate on the lives of the imperialistic Hins (the ultimately rational creatures) and especially their guiding principle, *kazo*. I look at their world as a peculiar form of a fake utopia: a world that promises to be the land of perfection, but instead turns out to be a land of horror. However, despite the inverse approach, I see the fictional realities of both the Hins and Behins as criticism of contemporary European civilization.

²⁹ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 164–65.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 332–33.

³¹ "In this council was resumed their old debate, and indeed, the only debate which ever happened in that country . . . whether the Yahoos should be exterminated from the face of the earth" (Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 299).

Szathmári's narrative framework makes a number of explicit references to political ideologies of the 1930s (mainly Italian fascism and British imperialism), but I shall take into consideration the implicit parallels with communism and anarchism as well.

Understanding the principle of *kazo* is the key to understanding Kazohinia. As Gulliver explains, "Kazo is pure reason that perceives with mathematical clarity, in a straight line, when and how it must act—so that the individual, through society, reaches the greatest possible well-being and comfort. . . . [It is] a strict mathematical concept for equality of service and counterservice, similar to the principle of action and reaction in physics."³² The core of the *kazo* morality is not goodness but aptness. There is no room for free decision, ambiguity, or individual difference; rather, there exists a general agreement on what is correct and a naturally obvious manner in which this accepted good is followed by everyone. The most striking and rather provocative feature of this mindset is the "mathematical clarity" referred to, the straightforward nature of the moral conclusion that leaves no room for individual consideration or freedom of choice. This feature may serve satirical purposes, but may be seen as ironic in itself.

Common usage refers to "strict mathematical concepts" as expressions of self-evident, unquestionable necessity, but mathematicians themselves might apply milder terms. It was in 1931—only a few years before *Kazohinia* was written—that Kurt Gödel published his incompleteness theorems in Vienna. The theorems deal with axiomatic systems and state that there are true propositions that cannot be proven from the axioms, therefore consistent systems cannot be complete and the consistency of the axioms cannot be proven within the system. Even though some mathematicians argue that these theorems (sometimes referred to as hypotheses) have a limited scope, Gödel's theorems are usually interpreted as referring to the limitations of the validity and completeness of mathematical representations of empirical reality.³³ Therefore, the reference to mathe-

³² Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 44.

³³ Geier János, "'Ha'—Avagy a Gödel Paradoxon Érvényességének Korlátai." ["If"—or the limits of the validity of the Gödel paradox], in *Az észleléstől a nyelvig*, ed. Csaba Pléh et al. (Budapest: Gondolat, 2004), 165–74. While Geier questions the overall validity of the Gödel-theorem (insisting on calling it a hypothesis and emphasizing the limits of its applicability), he also draws an interesting parallel to the understanding of the workings of the human mind and the necessary limitations of artificial intelligences. I owe thanks for the application of a mathematical principle to the understanding of human nature to Dmitry Halavach and Bálint Virág.

mathematical clarity in the definition of kazo is either ironic in itself, or operates on an idea of mathematics that existed prior to Gödel's notions.³⁴ Szathmári often revisited the themes of mathematical perfection and the supposed perfection of machines, which was seen in opposition to the inherently erroneous nature of humans. Szathmári sometimes even claimed that machine-like perfection for humanity was the norm, and that it is not to be taken either metaphorically or ironically. The application of Gödel's theorems shows that an ironic interpretation is inherent in the modern concept of mathematical or technological perfection, and also any fictional civilization that is derived from it. This also makes it clear that a web of irony permeates the book, not only as a poetic-rhetorical structure, but also in a wider sense as the author's implied approach.³⁵

The direct descriptions of the principle of kazo may seem insufficient, and indeed they are rather imperfect attempts at summarizing the principle whose manifestations constitute the core of the first part of the narrative, in which we learn that Hins (the inhabitants that consider themselves sane) behave automatically according to a positivist and utilitarian principle. This automatism suggests a mindset aimed at by total states: "Totalitarianism . . . aims at permanent psychological transformation."³⁶ Hins thus can be understood as products of a totalitarian regime in which control has been interiorized so that no more coercion is required.³⁷ Their behavior nevertheless seems humanitarian when the emphasis is laid on helping those in need. Gulliver's own experiences soon after his arrival indeed echo core Christian values: Gulliver receives food, clothes, and

³⁴ It is not suggested that Szathmári was so up-to-date in mathematical research that he could be aware of the recently published theorem. Therefore, the authorial intention probably overlaps with the assumptions of Enlightenment and the pre-Gödelian understanding of mathematics and hence science in general, inasmuch as natural sciences may be supposed to provide a full and unquestionable understanding of reality.

³⁵ Cf. Kelevéz Ágnes, "Gulliver újabb utazásai" [Further travels of Gulliver] in *Valóság és varázslat*, ed. Kabdebó Lóránt (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1979), 215–16.

³⁶ Claeys, "News from Somewhere," 163.

³⁷ The lack of coercion is fairly unusual in utopias, as Beauchamp argues: "the utopist . . . never really feels comfortable without his police force: never really proceeds as if the conditioning he employs will, alone, suffice to make men virtuous." Gorman Beauchamp, "Imperfect Men in Perfect Societies: Human Nature in Utopia," *Philosophy and Literature* 31, no. 2 (October 2007): 288.

shelter free of charge,³⁸ but he himself is only interesting for others as long as he is in trouble. When his immediate physical need is relieved, no attention is paid to him. The other inhabitants do not take notice of each other—the society is one of people living *near* one another, not *with* one another—and cohesion only becomes apparent in times of need. The society is communitarian as far as the free availability of all items necessary for the material well-being of the inhabitants through the common ownership of property is concerned, but atomistic when we consider the indifference of members of the “community” toward each other: “At the moment she had accomplished the task assigned to her by the kazo in connection with me, nothing further connected her with me. As if I had never existed.”³⁹ This extreme positivist view of the human being truncates Hins of anything that transcends the material or intellectual, resulting in spectacularly inorganic atomism.

In 1948 Theodor W. Adorno published an essay on Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* that I consider applicable to *Kazohinia* as well.⁴⁰ Adorno draws our attention to the “complementary relationship of collectivization and atomization” that is relevant for both Huxley’s and Szathmári’s work.⁴¹ The atomization of society is what causes the most suffering to Gulliver, who arrives to Kazohinia from an imperfect, yet non-atomistic society. He experiences Kazohinia as a place where “everyone was a stranger; not a single greeting was to be heard . . . Each person simply did not exist for the other.”⁴² Interpersonal communication is only valued if it serves a concrete purpose, demonstrating that the collective society creates no community of autonomous human beings, but a pool of individuals that act due to outside factors, the coherence of which is also maintained by outside, non-intrinsic forces.⁴³

³⁸ “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me” (Mt 25:35–36).

³⁹ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 149.

⁴⁰ Theodor Adorno, “Aldous Huxley and Utopia,” in *Prisms* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 95–118.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁴² Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 61.

⁴³ Alongside its symbolic use, the nonreferential use of language (also known as phatic function), which instead of conveying information maintains a relationship and establishes a mood of sociability, is not accepted in Kazohinia.

Dystopia and Political Ideology

When searching for an applicable ideological framework for the interpretation of *Kazohinia*, fascism seems a natural choice, as it is implicitly referred to in the narrative framework and was most influential in Hungary in the 1930s. Communism is also explicitly present, especially in the communal ownership of property, yet I consider the implicit relationship to fascism even more important—especially because it is not so obvious—in the interpretation of Szathmári's book. What follows is an intertextual analysis of *Kazohinia* in comparison with some of the most relevant texts of Italian fascism in order to underline the parallels of the dystopian book with the fascist ideology. It is not suggested, though, that Szathmári simply applies a fascist ideology to his fictional construction. Some aspects of Hin life—for instance, the denial of the past—explicitly oppose the attitudes of fascism. Despite the differences, the demonstration of similarities may serve to make explicit the monstrosity of their political ideals. Indeed, while a number of features, especially the common usage of public property and the materialism of Hin culture, relate to the ideas of communism, as it will be demonstrated, fascism (and especially its Italian version) is an apt ideological framework for its interpretation.

The atomization of the fictional society of the Hins underlines the relevance of the fascist political ideology that saw workers within corporations as living atoms. It is stated early in Giovanni Gentile's entry for "Fascism" in *Enciclopedia Italiana* that the "Fascist man is not only an individual but also a nation and a country."⁴⁴ This is valid for the collective individual in *Kazohinia*, pushed to the extremes, yet fascism's antipositivism and constant references to spiritual values and symbols are rather relevant to the world of the Behins. Thus, *Kazohinia* can be interpreted as a satire of extremes, engaging with both extreme positivism and extreme collectivism. Yet at least as far as the first half of the book is concerned, *Kazohinia* may be seen as a satiric portrayal of the goals of fascism.

If we continue reading Gentile and Benito Mussolini, we find that "the fascist conception of life is a religious one according to which man must be viewed in his immanent relation to a higher law [in a] conscious

⁴⁴ The source for the original texts on fascism is Mussolini – Gentile: 'Foundations and Doctrine of Fascism' (1932) in Schnapp, Jeffrey T, ed., *A Primer of Italian Fascism*. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 47.

membership in a spiritual community.”⁴⁵ This is not only a theoretical point, but it involves the practice of fascism (and it is not invalid to extend this statement to totalitarian regimes in general). As Roger Griffin claims, “frequently contemporary observers of Nazism and Fascism associated its totalitarian destruction of freedom with a secular form of religion.”⁴⁶ In this context, *Kazohinia* may be read as a complex satire of fascism: the “higher law” mentioned above is equivalent to kazo, whereas the explicitly spiritual nature of the community is characteristic of the Behin world. The lack of individuals in Kazohinia is also paralleled in the fascist doctrine: “Anti-individualistic, the fascist conception of life stresses the importance of the state. It affirms the value of the individual only insofar as his interests coincide with those of the state. . . . The fascist conception of the state is all-embracing. Outside of it no human or spiritual value can exist.”⁴⁷ This is also the way kazo behavior is understood, with the difference between the two being that the state is not emphasized, mainly because the Hins’ extremely strong psychological cohesion requires practically no coercive structures. But fascist doctrine also looks at the state and the nation as a spiritual unity. The idea of “a single nation that moves with a single conscience and will”⁴⁸ is echoed in the notion of kazo in Kazohinia, and a similar fusion of the society and the individual is also present.

Let us now contrast the definition of kazo with fascism as seen as “a higher, more powerful expression of personality, the fascist state embodies a spiritual force encompassing all manifestations of the moral and intellectual life of man. . . . It is the very principle, the soul of souls [*anima dell’anima*], that inspires every man who is a member of a civilized society, penetrating deep into his personality.”⁴⁹ This portrayal may be seen as echoing the definition of kazo. The “soul of souls” (also referred to as a “higher law”) is equivalent to kazo, and even though no “mathematical clarity” is mentioned in the fascist text, an ideology seen to be “encompassing all manifestations of the moral and individual life of man” leads to the individual existing solely within the framework of a larger collective that is considered to act as a substitute for the individual. This feature is also typical in the parallels between all totalitarian ideologies and collective

⁴⁵ Schnapp, *Primer of Italian Fascism*, 48.

⁴⁶ Roger Griffin, “God’s Counterfeiters,” in *Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion*, ed. Roger Griffin (London: Routledge, 2005), 16.

⁴⁷ Schnapp, *Primer of Italian Fascism*, 48.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

dystopias, and in this way dystopias reveal the dystopian nature of totalitarian ideologies.

The automatism implicit in the application of the principle of kazo also finds its parallel in fascist doctrine. The fascist state “represents an inwardly accepted standard and rule of conduct. A discipline of the whole person, it permeates the will no less than the intellect.”⁵⁰ Such discipline and the permeation of the personality by a rule of conduct allows for little individual choice. Even though discipline is hardly mentioned in *Kazohinia*, it is a guiding principle (“the soul of souls”) incorporated into Hins’ thinking that evokes the long term consequences of a *Brave New World*-type conditioning, in which conditioning became the mindset from birth onward. Thus, the ironic construction of *Kazohinia* allows for engaging with the ideas of fascism in interpretation, but the lack of state structures in *Kazohinia* point toward another important (if less powerful) ideology in the 1930s.

Anarchism

As we can learn from Bozóki and Sükösd, anarchism was present in Hungary from the late nineteenth century in the form of illegal radical groups that published a number of newspapers (some reaching a circulation of five thousand copies).⁵¹ The most important anarchist figure, Jenő Henrik Schmitt, was active from the 1890s, when he corresponded with Leo Tolstoy and published the writer’s letters in his Hungarian journals. But anarchism also exerted its influence in the Hungarian intellectual life in the 1930s. From a literary point of view, the most influential document from this milieu is Attila József’s (1905–1937) poem “Tiszta szívvel” (From a pure heart; 1925). Yet Attila József’s relationship to anarchism was not very strong, and neither was his association with the nationalist movement, though he participated in the Miklós Bartha Society.⁵² Szathmári was the society’s secretary, and was in contact with József as well.⁵³ This brief and marginal institutional link of *Kazohinia*’s author with anarchism would not justify the application of this ideology

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ András Bozóki and Miklós Sükösd, *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2006), 66.

⁵² Cf. Ibid., 176.

⁵³ Cf. Tasi, “Hiába,” 21.

as an interpretative tool for the novel, yet the stateless society described calls for understanding its relationship with anarchism. The guiding principle of Kazohinia, kazo, is followed automatically, and is understood as a kind of moral compass that works in the minds of healthy Hins and not in the unhealthy mind of Behins.⁵⁴ The automatic nature of the Hins in the application of the principles of kazo⁵⁵ can be understood as a form of an anthropological optimism. Once the principle is understood, it will automatically be followed: kazo becomes the structure of the Hins' brains. This feature makes many institutions of the state (and certainly all institutions of coercion) unnecessary, and the result is a structureless society very much in the fashion of an anarchist's dream.

Indeed, kazo presents a solution to Robert P. Wolff's problem, who claims that the political philosopher's analysis necessarily comes to a "dead end in . . . harmonizing the moral autonomy of the individual with the legitimate authority of the state."⁵⁶ In the fictional Hin society of Kazohinia, where the logic of the rule of kazo is binding, so strongly that doors are not locked and it is enough to leave a sign announcing that "entering is not useful," the moral autonomy of the individual seems to work without any sort of external authority.⁵⁷ According to Wolff, "Marx and Hobbes agree that in a community of men of good will, where the general good guided every citizen, the state would be unnecessary."⁵⁸ As we can see, this desirable state is achieved in Kazohinia, and yet the narrative offers a satirical depiction of this anarchist heaven that is indeed problematic. This remains the case, no matter whether the unquestionable acceptance of the principle of kazo (also interpreted as a form of good will) is to be interpreted as autonomy, or in a dystopian fashion as the lack of freedom resulting from generations of conditioning. Despite the similarity on the surface, Szathmári's fictional world (along with Huxley's *Brave New World*) does not feature anarchism's ideal of an autonomous person, which

⁵⁴ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 98.

⁵⁵ "Kazo is pure reason that perceives with mathematical clarity, in a straight line, when and how it must act," Ibid., 44.

⁵⁶ Robert Paul Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 69.

⁵⁷ Szathmári, *Voyage to Kazohinia*, 60.

⁵⁸ Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism*, 70. The contrary is also relevant, as Wolff claims that "many political philosophers have portrayed the state as a necessary evil forced upon men by their own inability to abide by the principles of morality" (ibid.). In Kazohinia this inability turns into an ability, hence most institutions of the state become unnecessary.

according to Wolff is a “combination of freedom and responsibility; it is a submission to laws one has made for oneself.”⁵⁹ If we contrast this definition with that of Adorno’s essay, it becomes obvious why the civilization of the Hins does not comport with the ideal of anarchism but rather may be interpreted as a criticism of it. According to Adorno, “Men no longer exist in dialectical opposition to society but rather are identical with it in their substance,”⁶⁰ a condition that results in “an absolute interchangeability that extinguishes man as an individual being.”⁶¹ This is clearly not Wolff’s ideal of an autonomous person as understood on a Kantian basis to belong to the realm of individual freedom—we have seen that such freedom is missing and alien from *Kazohinia*. The Hins should rather be seen as embodiments of the Kantian categorical imperative, making the fictional construct more a parody than a manifestation of the anarchist ideal.

In *Kazohinia*, political ideologies as distant from each other as anarchism and fascism are shown to result in unbearable worlds for the individual. *Kazohinia* portrays the everyday results of such a collectivist reality. Close reading of the novel also reveals the presence of such political ideologies in *Kazohinia* as imperialism, communism, fascism, and anarchism. The text reflects on these ideologies, and the interpretation of the book is enriched by the application of these ideological frameworks. At the same time, an understanding of these ideologies is enriched by experiencing the point of view of the individual suffering in a fictional world that is a manifestation of these ideologies. Yet of course, all this needs to be treated within the web of irony that permeates *Kazohinia*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, Theodor. “Aldous Huxley and Utopia.” In *Prisms*, 95–118. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997.
- Baker, Lynne. *Persons and Bodies: A Constitution View*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Beauchamp, Gorman. “Imperfect Men in Perfect Societies: Human Nature in Utopia.” In *Philosophy and Literature* 31, no. 2 (October 2007): 280–93.
- Bozóki, András and Miklós Sükösd. *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies*. Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2006.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 14.

⁶⁰ Adorno, “Aldous Huxley and Utopia,” 99.

⁶¹ Ibid., 104.

- Claeys, Gregory. "News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia." *History* 98 (April 2013): 145–73.
- Czigányik, Zsolt. "Zippers and Freedom: Discourses of Sexuality in *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*." In *CrosSections*, edited by Andrew C. Rouse et al., 97–106. Pécs: University of Pécs, 2010.
- Firchow, Peter. *The End of Utopia*. London: Associated University Presses, 1984.
- Fromm, Erich. *The Forgotten Language*. New York: Open Road, 2013.
- Geier, János. "'Ha'—Avagy a Gödel Paradoxon Érvényességének Korlátai" ["If"—or the limits of the validity of the Gödel paradox]. In *Az észleléstől a nyelvig* [From perception to language], edited by Csaba Pléh et al., 165–74. Budapest: Gondolat, 2004.
- Griffin, Roger. "God's Counterfeiters." In *Fascism, Totalitarianism and Political Religion*, edited by Roger Griffin, 1–31. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Hartvig, Gabriella. "Hungarian Gulliveriads." In *The Critical and Creative Reception of Eighteenth-Century British and Anglo-Irish Authors in Hungary*, 31–46. Pécs: University of Pécs, 2013.
- Horkheimer, Max. *Eclipse of Reason*. London: Continuum, 2004.
- Kelevéz, Ágnes. "Gulliver újabb utazásai" [Further travels of Gulliver]. In *Valóság és varázslat* [Reality and magic], edited by Lóránt Kabdebó, 215–24. Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1979.
- Knopf, Kerstin. "Introduction: Aboriginal Canada Revisited." In *Aboriginal Canada Revisited*, 2–27. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2008.
- Kohn, Margaret. "Colonialism." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford University, Spring 2014 Edition. Article published May 9, 2006; revised April 10, 2012. <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/colonialism/>.
- Kumar, Krishan. *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Mussolini, Benito and Giovanni Gentile. "Foundations and Doctrine of Fascism." In *A Primer of Italian Fascism*, edited by Jeffrey T. Schnapp, 46–71. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books, 2003.
- Segal, Howard. *Utopias: A Brief History from Ancient Writings to Virtual Communities*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Snow, C. P. *The Two Cultures*. Edited by Stefan Collini. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. London: Penguin, 1994.
- Szathmári, Sándor. *Voyage to Kazohinia*. Translated by Inez Kemenes. North Adams, Mass.: New Europe Books, 2012.
- Tasi, József. "Hiába. Szathmári Sándorral beszélget Tasi József" [In vain: Sándor Szathmári talks to József Tasi]. *Lyukasóra* 9 (1994): 21–23.
- Thass-Thienemann, Theodore. *Symbolic Behavior*. New York: Washington Square Press, 1968.
- Tófalvy, Éva. "Gyulától Kazohiniáig" [From the town of Gyula to Kazohinia]. *Bárka* 10, no. 1 (2012): 88–93.
- Wolff, Robert Paul. *In Defense of Anarchism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

What They Were Going to Do About It: Huxley's Peace Pamphlet in Pre-War Hungary

ÁKOS FARKAS | EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST

In 1936, two years after the establishment of the Peace Pledge Union (PPU), Britain's largest pacifist organisation of the twentieth century, one of the organization's founders, Aldous Huxley, undertook to write a pamphlet to promote the Union and its cause. In the thirty-one-page booklet, Huxley set out to persuade hard-headed opponents of pacifism that peace was not only a desirable, but also a practicable alternative to war. He pleaded that any kind of peace was preferable to any kind of war, even at the cost of rewarding the aggressor: Italy attacking Abyssinia, Japan devastating Manchuria and Germany bent on annexing "Middle Europe" and overrunning Russia.¹ Assessing the lessons of ancient and modern history, post-Darwinian biology, advanced economics, and even modern ethnography, Huxley formulated three major postulates: that war is alien to human nature; that war is always the problem and never the solution; and that lasting peace can only be achieved through fairness, mutual understanding, and the generosity of the powerful. The specific conclusion was that Great Britain, one of the "satisfied" powers of the international community—to use, somewhat anachronistically, a term introduced into Britain's political discourse by George Lansbury a year later, one of the "haves,"—should set a political example to the rest of the world by addressing the justifiable complaints of the "dissatisfied" countries—the

¹ The term "Middle Europe" is Huxley's own. Aldous Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do About It?: The Case for Constructive Peace* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1936), 25.

“have not.”² In the meantime, fair-minded Englishmen and Englishwomen were exhorted by Huxley to set a personal example to their government by supporting the Peace Pledge Union. The answer to the question in the pamphlet’s title, *What Are You Going to Do About It?* is thus simple: embrace the cause identified in the subtitle by taking immediate action to achieve “Constructive Peace.” Or, as the opening of the booklet advances its thesis, act in the belief that “what is called the utopian dream of pacifism is in fact a practical policy.”³

If Huxley felt obliged to distance himself from all sorts of “utopian” dreamers, he had a reason to do so. Although public opinion was far from hostile to the idea of universal peace at the time—memories of the Great War and fears of an even greater conflict were simultaneous determinants of public sentiment in Britain—the leading policy makers and opinion formers of the country viewed with suspicion this upsurge of supposedly naïve and uninformed popular pacifism behind the massive support enjoyed by the initiators of PPU’s peace pledge drive.

Naïveté was, as so often before and not infrequently afterwards, gendered as essentially feminine, which is why the movement’s founder, the Rev. Dick Sheppard, initially directed his nation-wide appeal to sign the Union’s peace pledge card to the country’s *men* only.⁴ Another move undertaken to avoid the organization appearing to be made up of bleeding hearts and trembling-kneed “sissies” was to recruit Brigadier-General F. P. Crozier, the “flinty soldier” turned peace activist, to join the sponsors of PPU.⁵ Equally importantly, the Union needed to possess intellectual credentials commensurate with the professional, academic, and political prestige that the opposing camp, represented by such influential proponents

² In his article “Why Pacifists Should Be Socialists” (1937), a major document of economic appeasement, then president of the PPU and leading Labour politician George Lansbury argued that “Italy’s and Germany’s aggressive behaviour was attributable to the fact that they were both ‘have-not’ powers,” as Gilbert explains. Mark Gilbert, “Pacifist Attitudes to Nazi Germany, 1936–45,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 27, no. 3 (July 1992): 495.

³ Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 4.

⁴ Andrew Rigby, “The Peace Pledge Union: From Peace to War, 1936–1945,” in *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Peter Brock and Thomas P. Socknat (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 170.

⁵ For the “flinty soldier,” see Michael Pugh, “Pacifism and Politics in Britain, 1931–1935,” *The Historical Journal* 23, no. 3 (September 1980): 644. With regard to “sissies,” the association of interwar pacifism with womanhood is a recurrent theme of the literature. See Josephine Eglin, “Women Pacifists in Interwar Britain,” in Brock and Socknat, *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*.

of sternness in the postwar international arena as a Harold Nicolson, a Robert William Seton-Watson or, indeed, a Winston Churchill, could rely on. Having secured the official sponsorship of such luminaries of Britain's artistic, intellectual, and political life as Bertrand Russell, Rose Macaulay, Storm Jameson, Vera Brittain, Max Plowman, John Middleton Murry, Siegfried Sassoon, Gerald Heard, and Aldous Huxley, as well as the informal endorsement of Cyril Joad, Ethel Mannin, George Bernard Shaw, and Virginia Woolf,⁶ the Union could feel sufficiently confident in the face of any journalistic or scholarly challenge. As historian Martin Ceadel rightly concludes, the collective leadership of the movement "comprised perhaps the most intellectually distinguished committee ever assembled by a controversial British pressure group."⁷

Distinguished in their various fields of activity as its leaders may have been, the movement certainly stirred up a disturbing amount of controversy early on, even before the policy of appeasement with which it came to be associated was fatally discredited by modern history's worst disaster—one that Neville Chamberlain's fumbling attempts at pacifying Nazism unleashed or at least failed to avert. The initial popularity of PPU, which managed to garner more than 130,000 supporters to sign its formulaic pledge advocating and upholding peace, and the prestige of Huxley's fellow-sponsors notwithstanding, the writer of *What Are You Going to Do About It?* was himself subjected to some unfriendly comments from a number of prominent, mostly (but not exclusively) left-leaning intellectuals. Stephen Spender, for example, claimed that Huxley's plea for the Union's "dogmatic and correct pacifism" was tantamount to sacrificing "the freedom and even the lives of oppressed pacifists and socialists in Italy, Germany and Austria."⁸ Another member of the Auden Group, Cecil Day-Lewis, sadly concluded that with the self-defeating "doctrine of despair" promoted in his pamphlet, Huxley had "turned his back on" his younger admirers "forever."⁹ In a private letter Julian Bell, Virginia

⁶ David C. Lukowitz, "British Pacifists and Appeasement: The Peace Pledge Union," *Journal of Contemporary History* 9, no. 1 (January 1974): 117; Gilbert, "Pacifist Attitudes," 494.

⁷ Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain 1914–1945: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 223.

⁸ Quoted in Donald Watt, introduction to *Aldous Huxley, the Critical Heritage*, ed. Donald Watt (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1975), 19.

⁹ Cecil Day-Lewis, "WE are NOT going to do NOTHING: A Reply to Aldous Huxley's 'What Are You Going to Do About It,'" in Watt, *Aldous Huxley, the Critical Heritage*, 232.

Woolf's nephew, even went so far as to suggest that "Aldous . . . must be slightly mad."¹⁰

Seemingly less offensive than the charge of madness, Day-Lewis's patronizing conclusion that Huxley's "pamphlet does more credit to [its writer's] heart than to his head" was precisely the kind of remark that Huxley must have intended to pre-empt in *What Are You Going to Do* by repeatedly and emphatically appealing to his readers' intelligence, as well as to their feelings or will. The painstakingly worked-out conceptual argument of the pamphlet was primarily meant to provide its peace-loving readership with an "*intellectual* justification for their attitude," which could then serve as the basis of meaningful action, because "where there's a will—and, along with will, feeling and *intelligence*—there's a way," as the pamphlet reassures its author's like-minded audience.¹¹ Clearly, Huxley had no intention of playing the zero-sum game in which his own reputation as a worldly and wise authority on just about everything, a much-travelled man of letters who was as yet thought of as a thinker rather than a seer, would suffer just as much as the cause of pacifism would gain from his support.

The contradictory gambit by which the pamphlet both rejects and affirms the conventional assumption that universal peace is a "utopian" proposition through maintaining that this particular dream can be a "practical policy" can thus be seen as a witty ruse. It was probably intended to give the lie in advance to the kind of accusations that were levelled at Huxley by Spender and his comrades after the publication of *What Are You Going to Do*. The ideas to be put forward here, suggests the opening, may *appear* to be illusory, but are in fact founded on the solid grounds of empirical knowledge and logical reasoning—something that the "militarists" themselves, those "incurable romantic[s]," are "constitutionally incapable of facing."¹²

Written in the form of a Socratic dialogue between the sage (Huxley himself) and his seemingly better-informed opponent—Huxley's doggedly pragmatic and level-headed "intellectual heckler"—the pamphlet is built up in such a way as to convince the open-minded reader that appearances of reality can be misleading, that dreams can come true, and that utopia can in fact be achieved. Peace in a conflict-ridden world threat-

¹⁰ Quoted in Watt, introduction, 19.

¹¹ Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 3, 8. Emphasis added.

¹² Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 26.

ened from every corner *is* a utopia, the argument implies, but it is a *feasible* utopia, provided the word is taken to mean what its alternative etymology suggests—a *good* place, rather than a *no*-place; *eutopia*, rather than *outopia*.¹³ Alternatively, if the world thus envisaged cannot be entirely good, it should still strive to be considerably *better* if it is to qualify as Huxley's paradoxical utopia of peace. Huxley would probably have agreed with the genre's leading expert, Gregory Claeys, that Thomas More's foundational text established a tradition that "represents not the perfect society, only a radically *improved* one." Despite the greater order and stronger morals—including nonviolent coexistence, that is, peace—shown to be achieved in More's *Utopia* and its offshoots, "human behaviour is not portrayed as being so substantially modified as to be unbelievable."¹⁴

"Thou art translated": From Peace to Nation

There were readers of Huxley in "Middle Europe," too, who shared the by then world-famous writer's conviction that dreams can come true, that what is seen by many as a hazy utopia can be "a practical policy—indeed, the only practical, the only realistic policy that there is."¹⁵ One of these supposedly realistic dreamers, or "practical utopians," was a certain Dr. Aladár Kálló, the Hungarian translator of Huxley's peace pamphlet of 1936. But as testified by the Hungarian-language version, published within a year of its source text, the translator's wished-for utopia was a far cry from Huxley's pacifist proposal. Peace, as such, had little to do with Dr. Kálló's truncated translation, its tendentious foreword, and its abrupt title. *Revíziót!*—Revision!—leaps the single, optative word-sentence off the cover of the Hungarian rendition of Huxley's original.

"Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee. Thou art translated," is perhaps the most often quoted line uttered by the character Quince, spoken upon setting eyes on his friend changed from declaiming ham actor into braying ass in William Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—Hux-

¹³ A useful contrastive definition of the terms *utopia* (i.e. *outopia*) and *eutopia* based on the two terms' Morean derivation is offered here by Fátima Vieira, "The Concept of Utopia," in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4–5.

¹⁴ Gregory Claeys, *Searching for Utopia: The History of an Idea* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011), 59. Emphasis added.

¹⁵ Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 4.

ley's number-one source of intertextual reference in *Brave New World* and elsewhere. The writer of *What Are You Going to Do* could well have been reminded of Quince's words if he had in fact glimpsed his own transmogrified likeness in the distorting mirror held up to him by his Hungarian translator. One wonders whether Huxley's reaction would have been laughter, sadness, or uncharacteristic anger if he had actually seen his portrait appearing in the gaudy colors of irredentist propaganda in Dr. Kálló's foreword grafted onto his partial translation of Huxley's pamphlet. A stranger to the hyperbolic tropes that characterized Hungary's revisionist literature of the interwar period, Huxley would likely have been astounded by what he would have seen in Kálló's cracked looking glass. He would likely have been deeply embarrassed to see himself as the "guiding star" of "suffering, humiliated nations," as he is portrayed in the translator's short, but nonetheless grandiloquent foreword.¹⁶ It is easy to imagine the astonishment of this gentlest of literary pacifists finding himself cast in the role of a freedom-fighting George Byron or a brother-in-arms of the Hungarophilic media mogul Lord Rothermere, brandishing his "shining pen" and meting out justice left and right as a demigod whose "manly courage" would open the way to "the advent of a happier future" for Hungary.¹⁷

The painful inappropriateness of such metaphors is far less surprising to the student of Hungary's revisionist propaganda of the day than it could have been to Huxley himself. In the context of the flowery and sometimes absurdly self-contradictory rhetoric characterizing the lower registers of the country's anti-Versailles (or, properly, anti-Trianon) writing, it was perfectly acceptable to celebrate a British press magnate sympathetic to Hungary's post-Trianon complaints now as an heir apparent to the throne of a restored Austria-Hungary, now as an avatar of the nation's staunchest republican, the violently anti-Habsburg, anti-Austria Lajos Kossuth. To the student of the times there is nothing unique about the translator's Huxley-Rothermere comparison, despite the disdain, apparently unknown to Kálló, expressed by Huxley himself for Hungary's post-Trianon hero Harold Sidney Harmsworth, the First Viscount of Rothermere. It is worth recalling that Anthony Beavis, the largely autobiographical protagonist of

¹⁶ Aladár Kálló, foreword to Aldous Huxley, *Revíziót! [What Are You Going to Do About It? The Case for Constructive Peace]*, trans. Aladár Kálló (Budapest: Wollner Nyomda, 1937), 3; "Vezérlőcsillagunk . . . szenvedő, megalázott népek"; my translation.

¹⁷ Kálló, foreword to *Revíziót!*, 3; "Ragyogó tollával, férfias bátorságával . . . a rájuk virradó boldogabb jövő"; my translation.

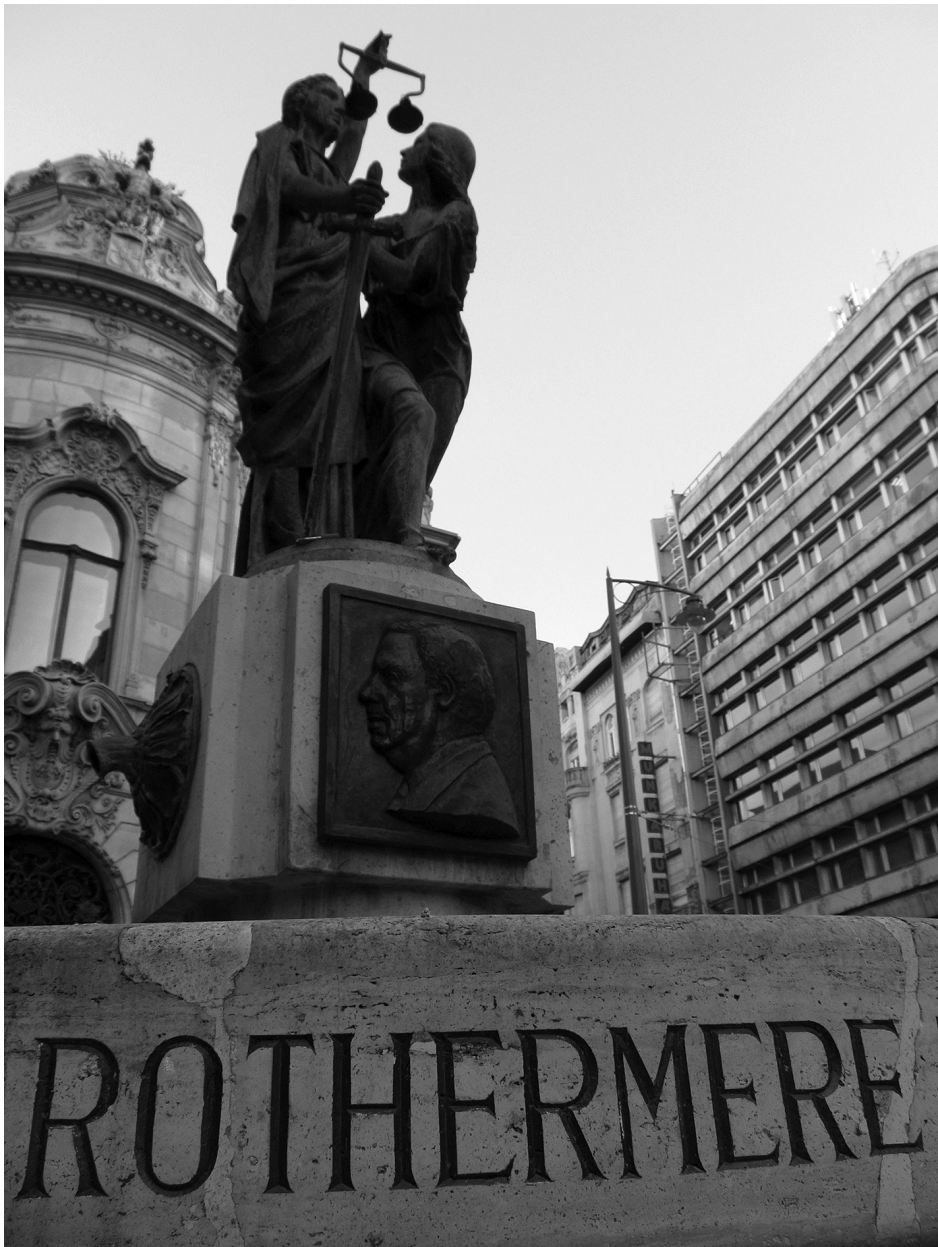


Figure 1. The Fountain of Hungarian Justice in Budapest.
(Photograph by Balázs P. Farkas, December 2014.)

Eyeless in Gaza, a novel published in the same year as *What Are You Going to Do* and expressing much the same sentiments as the pamphlet, has this to say of press magnates like Rothermere and his American counterpart William Randolph Hearst: "A Hearst, a Rothermere, can mould my feelings, coerce my thinking. But no amount of propaganda can make my digestion or metabolism become identical to theirs. *Cogito ergo Rothermere est*. But *caco ergo sum*."¹⁸ Huxley saw the proprietor of the tabloid newspapers *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Mail* as a king all right—the king of Britain's gutter press.

As for Kálló's earlier prefiguration of Huxley, the perceived egotism of the early Romantics in general and Byron's "fascinatingly and tragi-comically Byronic" posturing in particular were mannerisms that Huxley found distinctly unappealing.¹⁹ The translator's celebratory comparison of Huxley's supposedly brave defiance of "his country's official policies" when defending the Great War's losers and the Romantic poet's perceived heroic stance on behalf of freedom-fighting Greece would certainly look absurd anywhere outside the cultural-historical context of the foreword.²⁰

Aside from Huxley's temperamental aversion to any form of heroics, the worst risk that Huxley and his fellow sponsors of the Peace Pledge Union ran in the Britain of the mid-1930s was, as suggested above, being frowned at by some, but definitely not all, left-leaning intellectuals, or dismissed as "fantastic utopians" by some, but again not all, conservative proponents of Germany's forceful "containment." As Martin Ceadel concludes, "the PPU's respectability . . . protected British pacifism from much of the obloquy that might have followed its call for a policy of defencelessness."²¹ Even during the war, the "tacit agreement between . . . most pacifists and most defencists" enabled the latter, that is, the whole-hearted supporters of Britain's war effort, "to recognize the legitimacy of the pacifists, if only as an easy way of demonstrating Britain's moral superiority over its totalitarian foes."²² Although Huxley's PPU never

¹⁸ Aldous Huxley, *Eyeless in Gaza* (Harrmondsworth: Penguin, 1955), 98. Emphasis in original.

¹⁹ Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (London: Flamingo, 1994), 81.

²⁰ Kálló, foreword to *Revíziót!*, 3; "Hazájuk hivatalos állásfoglalását"; my translation.

²¹ Martin Ceadel, "A Legitimate Peace Movement: The Case of Britain, 1918–1945," in Brock and Socknat, *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*, 140.

²² *Ibid.*, 141.

managed to become the irresistible political force that its founders hoped it to grow into, the aura of intellectual excellence and indisputable integrity surrounding it saved the Union (and other English pacifist movements alongside it) from exposure to public scorn before, as well as official persecution after, the outbreak of war. As for the years preceding Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's governmental policy of appeasement in the late 1930s, proponents of generosity toward the losers of World War I had absolutely nothing to fear in Britain. As expert researcher of the pacifist movements of the period Michael Pugh puts it with sharply cogent wit, the intellectual sponsors of the PPU "possessed the useful attribute of being rebels at a time when conventional views about economics, parliament and foreign policy were at risk."²³

Kálló's lack of knowledge concerning the English novelist's sympathies and antipathies or the current tide of political opinion in Britain could, in itself, be understandable in the given context where only a thin layer of Hungary's elite was able, or bothered, to gain up-to-date in-depth information on what was going on in the world at large. As the early history of Huxley's Hungarian reception testifies,²⁴ Kálló's intellectual betters, writers of the quality liberal-humanist magazine *Nyugat* ("The West") or contributors to the conservative elite's journal *Magyar Szemle* ("Hungarian Review"), were certainly better tuned in to the latest news about current trends in London's social and political life than the general public of which Aladár Kálló appears to have been part. The western, mainly English and French, books, periodicals, and even daily papers that Hungary's leading literary and artistic intellectuals had regular access to—in large part due to their major sponsor, the wealthy industrialist Baron Lajos Hatvany's connections and magnanimity—are highly unlikely to have been available to Huxley's obscure translator. Kálló must also have been denied the resources at the disposal of Count István Bethlen's exclusive foreign policy think tank and conservative press organ. Not only did he not contribute to either *Nyugat* or *Magyar Szemle*, Kálló prob-

²³ Pugh, "Pacifism and Politics in Britain," 644.

²⁴ For this, see my Hungarian-language assessment of the early translation and critical reception of Huxley's work in Hungary: Ákos Farkas, "Fehérek között egy másik európai: Aldous Huxley fogadtatása a két háború közti Magyarországon [Another European among the whites: The reception of Aldous Huxley in the Hungary of the interwar period]," in *Idegen Költők—Örök Barátaink: Világirodalom a magyar kulturális emlékezetben*, ed. Bálint Gárdos et al. (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2010), 93–104.

ably never even read these highbrow publications—let alone study their various sources.

Nevertheless, Kálló's apparently complete ignorance of a great Western power's much publicized international policies suggested by his prefatory remarks on Huxley's supposedly nonconformist attitudes is still amazing. After all, news of the "moderate" politician Neville Chamberlain's rise to power and what this might have promised for Germany and perhaps Hungary, too, must have trickled down to even the lowest layers of Hungary's intelligentsia. One cannot but assume that Kálló had reasons other than being fatally ill-informed for insisting on Huxley's unlikely qualities of "manly courage" in the face of some imaginary persecution alluded to in the foreword. Such seemingly absurd insistence is, after all, logically complemented by the translator's treatment of the source text itself. If the fearless champion of international justice that Huxley is made out to be in Kálló's bloated rhetoric turned out to be no more than a meek, and by no means violently disposed, promoter of peace and conciliatory politics in the text actually translated, the reader would likely have suspected the foreword's author of willful distortion. But by carefully selecting what to include in his translation and what to leave out, Kálló cleverly forestalled, or thought to have forestalled, any censure that such blatant contradiction between body text and foreword might provoke.

It is not only that the Hungarian reader is allowed access by Kálló to no more than a fraction—about one-eighth—of the original pamphlet's full length. By translating only the tenth chapter of Huxley's twelve-chapter booklet, the one bearing immediate relevance to the plight of the countries sharing Hungary's fate at the Versailles peace treaties, Kálló would have done nothing truly reprehensible—provided he had openly admitted to and explained the truncation. This much and no more of Huxley's lengthy deliberations on everything from ancient history to the behavior of ants and wolves concerns us in Hungary today, is what he could have said. But he didn't. There is nothing in or around the drastically curtailed source text rendered into Hungarian to indicate that the translation is anything but complete. What emerges from Huxley's sophisticated apology of *pacifism* as an intellectually, what is more, scientifically justifiable policy is thus some single-minded pursuit of unforgiving truth and retributive political righteousness where the perceived wrongs committed against Germany, Japan, Italy, and by implication, Hungary at Versailles and Trianon are concerned. It is not, then, *peace for the world* but—to quote the country's popular outcry of the interwar period—*justice for Hungary* that Huxley



Figure 2. Transatlantic flight "Justice for Hungary." (Source: Wikimedia.)

seems to demand in his pamphlet,²⁵ in which in its original form the translator's country is mentioned only once, and then as a hero of peace rather than a victim of war in a context of nineteenth-, rather than twentieth-century history. Ironically, the only passage explicitly referring to Hungary was deemed unworthy of translation by Kálló. The omission is, in a way, logical: in the untranslated remark on Hungary, Huxley applauds the country's successful policies of "preventive peace" pursued in the face of subordination by Austria in the previous century.²⁶ Commending the

²⁵ The phrase "justice for Hungary" appears in the title of an English-language volume of Count István Bethlen's speeches given in London, as a banner stencilled on the fuselage of a Hungarian airplane crossing the Atlantic Ocean in 1931, and, in Hungarian, as the title of a popular song composed in 1939 (*Igazságot Magyarországnak*). There is even an ornamental fountain in Budapest, called "The Well of Hungary's Justice" (*A Magyar Igazság kútja*), erected in 1929 and dedicated to Lord Rothermere. These and many more appearances of the slogan testify to the popularity and persistence in the interwar period of the phrase summing up Hungary's demands for territorial revision. Miklós Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revision in Hungary, 1920–1945*, trans. Thomas J. DeKornfeld and Helen DeKornfeld (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2007), 131, 151, 229.

²⁶ Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 15.

use of nonviolent means of conducting a country's affairs was Huxley's agenda, not Kálló's.

Today's reader familiar with twentieth-century literature and, within that, the work of another, later, practitioner of speculative fiction, Vladimir Nabokov, may well be reminded by all this of the Russian-American novelist's *Pale Fire*, a satire published in 1962. Observed through Nabokov's lens, Aladár Kálló, that mission-driven and passion-blinded translator of Huxley's peace pamphlet, comes through as a real-life prefiguration of Charles Kinbote, self-appointed executor of his dead colleague John Shade's literary estate and editor of the late professor's long autobiographical poem. Just as *Pale Fire*'s émigré academic proceeds to turn, with his convoluted and madly self-referential endnotes, his mistakenly assassinated friend Professor Shade's 999 intensely and painfully personal cantos into a political cipher supposedly promoting, as the meandering posthumous comments trace, the cause of the "editor" Kinbote's own megalomaniacal claim to the throne of his native Zembla, so did Dr. Kálló try to make Huxley, an Englishman by all appearances intensely and painfully *uninterested* in Hungary's specific wrongs, into a vocal spokesperson for redressing the grievances of the translator's quaint little country.

It is, however, not only the absurdity but the sadness, too, of his machinations that relates Dr. Kálló's fantastically distorted translation to the escapades of his literary counterpart in Nabokov's satirical allegory of academic and political manipulation. If Charles Kinbote, a refugee from a merciless Soviet-style dictatorship, had every reason to lose his sanity and, with it, his scholarly integrity, Dr. Kálló's grave violation of every major item in the protocols of the translator's profession can also be understood. Together with his target audience of Hungary's interwar book-reading population, this early translator of Huxley's work into Hungarian was not entirely unjustified in the bitterness he evidently felt about history's rough treatment of his country. After all, French, English, and American politicians, journalists, and historians—from such contemporaries as Marshal Ferdinand Foch and Lord Robert Cecil to writers of retrospective assessments as historian A. J. P. Taylor or foreign correspondent David Andelman—arguing that the outbreak of the Second World War was coded in the peace treaties concluding the First have a considerable academic and popular following to this day in the English-speaking world.²⁷

²⁷ Alan Sharp, himself a "post-revisionist" rather than a "revisionist" historian, gives what amounts to a roll-call of authorities claiming that the Paris Peace

Whatever sentiments one may share with Kálló in retrospect, no self-respecting scholar can help but voice serious disapproval of the translator's blatant misrepresentation of the text he proffered to his fellow Hungarians as yet unfamiliar with Huxley's work and mentality. To leave out everything from the translation that might cast the palest shadow of a doubt on past, present, or future wrongdoings of the increasingly aggressive "have-nots" constitutes a far more sinister falsification than the clumsily distorted portrait of Huxley sketched in by Kálló in his foreword or the inclusion, on behalf of Huxley, of Hungary in a group of countries whose claims the pamphlet sets out to vindicate. That nothing in *Revíziót!* remains of Huxley's misgivings voiced in *What Are You Going to Do* concerning the implications of the Italian and Japanese atrocities committed against Abyssinia and Manchuria, respectively, or the dangers of the Rhineland's remilitarization by Hitler and the Führer's thinly veiled plans to overrun much of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and then Russia, renders everything in Kálló's version deeply suspect—even the bits more or less adequately translated. By insinuating that the acts of aggression perpetrated by the worst rogues of the world community have the full endorsement of an internationally acclaimed writer of Huxley's moral and intellectual stature, the translator falsifies the most important message conveyed by Huxley's plea. What Huxley most forcefully argues in *What Are You Going to Do About It?* is the exact opposite of what *Revíziót!* suggests: the ends, as Huxley vocally asserts, never justify the means. In the English writer's resounding and oft-repeated words, "the means determine the ends; and however excellent intentions may be, bad or merely unsuitable means must inevitably produce results quite unlike the good ends originally proposed."²⁸ Needless to say, Huxley's condemnation of Machiavellian means to a moral end is among the original text's key passages left out of Kálló's translation.

How, today's reader could ask, was Kálló able to get away with such flagrant falsification posturing as straight translation? Was there nobody around to blow the whistle? Wasn't there a conscientious editor on hand to counsel the publisher or chastise the translator? And if these were not available, why did Huxley himself not intervene, or have an agent intervene on his behalf, to prevent the sully of his name by association with

Treaties acted as a time bomb set to explode twenty years after its signing. Alan Sharp, "The Versailles Settlement: The Start of the Road to the Second World War?" in *Origins of the Second World War: An International Perspective*, ed. Frank McDonough (London: Continuum, 2011), 15, 16, 31.

²⁸ Huxley, *What Are You Going to Do*, 10.

ideas so obviously alien to the moral and intellectual drift of his peace pamphlet in particular, and his entire career as a responsible man of letters in general? The answer is twofold. To begin with, Huxley's awareness of the goings-on in a distant country of whose existence he hardly knew must have been perfunctory at best. True, the untranslated passage in *What Are You Going to Do* mentioned above and at least two more works of Huxley's cite Hungarian history as an illustration of how nonviolent resistance can succeed, but Huxley never evinced any documented interest in Hungary's recent past or current politics.²⁹ No, it is highly unlikely that Huxley would have bothered to instruct his agent to avenge the abuse of his name in what must have been Zembla or, rather, Ruritania to him.

Compared to an unlikely reaction to the mistranslation of his pamphlet on Huxley's part, the situation within Hungary at the time is a different matter altogether. There *were* legitimate publishing houses in Budapest, many of which made it their prime concern to render the best English writers of the time accessible to the Hungarian public in quality translation. And Huxley was one of their great favourites. By the time Kálló's botched work appeared, the country's leading publishers had presented their patrons with *Antic Hay*, *Point Counter Point*, *Brave New World*, and even *Eyeless in Gaza* in highly readable and fairly reliable Hungarian translation.³⁰ In the meantime, *Nyugat* and *Magyar Szemle*, the quality literary and cultural journals referred to above, did their best to provide their subscribers with intelligent commentary and fresh news concerning their English-language favorites, including Huxley. How come then that such an abomination could occur?

The most likely answer to the vexing question of how all this could have gone unnoticed is that Kálló's effort was probably not regarded as such a serious case of scholarly and political infringement as it must surely appear today. Had they chanced upon the brochure bearing the imprint of an obscure press, discerning readers of *Nyugat* or *Magyar Szemle* would

²⁹ Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1941), 147; and *An Encyclopaedia of Pacifism*, ed. Aldous Huxley (London: Chatto and Windus, 1941), 110.

³⁰ In the order of appearance in Hungarian translation: Aldous Huxley, *A végzet bábjátéka* [*Point Counter Point*, 1928], trans. Pál Tábori (Budapest: Nova, 1933); *Szép új világ* [*Brave New World*, 1932], trans. Tivadar Szinnai (Budapest: Pantheon, 1934); *Légnadrág és Társai* [*Antic Hay*, 1923], trans. György Bálint (Budapest: Pesti Napló, 1936); *A vak Sámson* [*Eyeless in Gaza*, 1936], trans. András Hevesi (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1937).

certainly have raised an eyebrow seeing Kálló's inept efforts at painting so obviously distorted a portrait of England's best-known novelist. However, the crudities of the translator's tastes, his stylistic solecisms and, above all, his highly selective approach to what should be included in his translation, would probably have been attributed to the genre and the medium of the foreword. The revisionist propaganda rampant in Hungary between the two world wars exemplified by Kálló's commentary tended to be, as historian Miklós Zeidler explains, "published by their author or by minor official agencies and not by legitimate publishing houses"—such as those issuing Huxley's major works, one might add.³¹ Aesthetic and scholarly expectations, fairly high among Huxley's Hungarian readers, would have been lowered accordingly.

As for the political drift of Kálló's enterprise, this was likely to have been met with a kind of forgiving sympathy, if not in fact with wholehearted approval on all sides. Nobody in the Hungary of the late 1930s, whether positioning themselves on the far left, in the conservative-liberal middle, or on the extreme right, would have taken exception to the thesis emblematically summarized in Kálló's counterfeit title demanding revision. As Zeidler posits, "there were practically no Hungarians who approved of the [territorial] changes [sanctioned by the peace treaty of Trianon]. Those few, whose detestation of the counterrevolutionary system was so intense that they objected to any revision of the peace treaty for the benefit of 'Horthy's Hungary,' later and with a more thorough understanding of the situation became critics of the Treaty of Trianon and supporters of revision."³²

In an article on British pacifism during World War II, Richard A. Rempel astutely observed that "Hitler had achieved 'what no other person had done'—he had united in opposition to him in Britain the [militant] 'realists' and the 'idealists' who had once been sympathetic to Germany."³³ It is fair to say that Georges Clemenceau, the French architect of the Versailles peace treaties, had achieved, twenty years or so earlier, something very similar in Hungary. He certainly managed to unite Hungary's population at large in its shared bitterness over Trianon and its dismemberment of their country. And, as noted above, that applied to most of Hungary's intellectual elite, too. United in his refusal to acquiesce

³¹ Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revision*, 230.

³² *Ibid.*, 186.

³³ Richard A. Rempel, "The Dilemmas of British Pacifists During World War II," *The Journal of Modern History* 50, no. 4, Supplement (December 1978): D1214.

to the terms of the peace dictates was the left-leaning populist from the provinces with the urban liberal humanist, the Catholic immigrant with the Protestant native, the down-to-earth novelist with the refined lyrical poet, and all of these with the “mere” stage entertainer, as revealed by one look at the contents page of *Bleeding Hungary*, a late 1920s thematic anthology of patriotic laments edited by one of Hungary’s most highly regarded and least nationalistic poets, Dezső Kosztolányi. It is against such a background that the publication of *Revíziót!*, that badly flawed translation of *What Are You Going to Do About It?*, Huxley’s by now largely forgotten piece of interwar marginalia, is to be assessed.

Another and perhaps more relevant framework for critical assessment is provided by the respective positions of Huxley’s pamphlet and its truncated Hungarian version in the realm of utopian thinking at large, of which both *What Are You Going to Do About It?* and *Revíziót!* are representative pieces in very different ways. The vision emerging from Kálló’s Hungarian rendering is most certainly not a pacifist dream but something far less familiar, though by no means unknown, to students of the genre associated with the name of Thomas More. What Dr. Kálló, ineptly impersonating Aldous Huxley, demands is a utopia, even if it is not of the type promoted by the author of the text he purported to translate. The yearning for peace among nations has no doubt been a ubiquitous motif of most utopian speculations, from visions of the classical Golden Age to Karl Marx’s scientific prophecies of a “classless” and “stateless” communism. But then dreams of prosperity achieved by individual nations going it alone are equally familiar locations of utopian thinking. Always envisaged as select communities of exceptional significance, whether real-life formations like the city state of Sparta, Jerusalem, the nascent nations of the Americas, or the glorious Soviet Union facing down its fearsome opponents, or fictional ones such as King Utopus’s island, the City of the Sun, or the American author Marge Piercy’s feminist stronghold of Matapoissett, each wages a just war against a variety of malevolent powers threatening its very existence.³⁴ Utopias of peace, then, are contrasted with utopias of nation, if not utopias of war. Based on the foregoing, it is easy

³⁴ The following are the works of speculative fiction (with the dates of the works’ first appearance in parentheses) mentioned above where the communities portrayed are prepared to resort to the force of arms in defence of their respective nations or to impose their ideal political order on hostile nations or communities: Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516); Tommaso Campanella, *La città del Sole* (1602); Marge Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976).

to decide which conception is embraced by Huxley and which is promoted by Kálló. Rather than qualifying as the pacifist kind, the utopia imagined by the latter is of a nationalist character.

Coda

Different as the fundamental nature of their respective utopias may have been, the English writer and the Hungarian translator of *What Are You Going to Do About It?* had one important thing in common. Huxley and Kálló both believed in the practicability of their utopian ideals, and both came to be bitterly disappointed in their expectations. Despite all the efforts of his far more powerful political supporters, Huxley's dreams of a peaceful world were shattered within less than three years of his pamphlet's publication. Kálló's fervently desired vindication of his country and its claims for a supposedly more equitable division of land, population, and resources also spectacularly failed to materialize. The outbreak of the Second World War was not to be averted as Huxley wished it to be, and at its conclusion Hungary found itself in a position not better—as Kálló would have liked to see—but considerably worse than it had been in after the First. The apparently feasible *eutopias* of both versions of the pamphlet turned out to be hazy *outopias*—by definition the sadly unrealizable ideals that the everyday use of the word implies.

There is yet another, highly ironic analogy between the fates of Huxley's booklet and its Hungarian translation. It is worth pondering that the title of the former was to be appropriated for military propaganda in 1944, when a drawing offering the graphic pictorial illustration of Japanese atrocities committed somewhere in the Far Eastern theater was followed by a caption posing the question, "What are you going to do about it?" The answer given by the poster itself—"Stay on the job until every murdering Jap is wiped out!"—may have been appropriate to the given historical situation, but had very little to do with the benign pacifism argued for in the pamphlet that appears to have inspired the title of the belligerent print.³⁵ One marginal aspect of the historical context in which Kálló's Hungarian translation appeared tells a rather different, but not unrelated,

³⁵ "What are you going to do about it? Stay on the job until every murdering Jap is wiped out!" Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Library of Congress, reproduction number LC-USZC4-1656, accessed January 9, 2015, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/90712749/>.

story. Wollner Nyomda [W. Press], Kálló's publisher, is on record to have issued very few titles. These include two books of poetry whose authors, Endre Barát and Ferenc Kis, saw persecution for their Jewish descent by the authorities of the country whose vindication Kálló's efforts as Huxley's Hungarian translator and editor had been meant to serve.³⁶

Finally, it is a well-known fact of Aldous Huxley's biography that on seeing the utter disappointment of his and PPU's pacifist hopes, the English writer left Britain for the USA, where he then lived out the remaining decades of his life. No comparably substantial data has emerged concerning the subsequent fate of Dr. Aladár Kálló to date. In fact, his name has all but disappeared from Hungary's cultural memory. The only public reminder of Aladár Kálló's existence and his activities as a modest citizen of the republic of letters is the title page of his partial translation into Hungarian of Aldous Huxley's peace pamphlet of 1936. One wonders what his surviving compatriots, his fellow Hungarians living in a country deeply divided to this day in its sentiments about the past, are going to do about it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barát, Endre. *Anteus dalok: versek* [Anteus songs: poems]. Budapest: Labor/Wollner Ny., 1934.
- Ceadel, Martin. "A Legitimate Peace Movement: The Case of Britain, 1918–1945." In *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*, edited by Peter Brock and Thomas P. Socknat, 134–48. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- . *Pacifism in Britain 1914–1945: The Defining of a Faith*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- Claeys, Gregory. *Searching for Utopia: The History of an Idea*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2011.
- Day-Lewis, Cecil. "WE are NOT going to do NOTHING: A Reply to Aldous Huxley's 'What Are You Going to Do About It'." In *Aldous Huxley, the Critical Heritage*, edited by Donald Watt. London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1975.
- Eglin, Josephine. "Women Pacifists in Interwar Britain." In *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*, edited by Peter Brock and Thomas P. Socknat, 149–68. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Farkas, Ákos. "Fehérek között egy másik európai: Aldous Huxley fogadtatása a két háború közti Magyarországon" [Another European among the whites: The

³⁶ Endre Barát, *Anteus dalok: versek* [Anteus songs: poems] (Budapest: Labor/Wollner Ny., 1934); and Ferenc Kis, *Fegyvertelen: Kis Ferenc versei* [Unarmed: poems by F. K.] (Budapest: Wollner Ny., 1936).

- reception of Aldous Huxley in the Hungary of the interwar period]. In *Idegen költők—örök barátaink: világirodalom a magyar kulturális emlékezetben*, edited by Bálint Gárdos et al., 93–104. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2010.
- Gilbert, Mark. "Pacifist Attitudes to Nazi Germany, 1936–45." *Journal of Contemporary History* 27, no. 3 (July 1992): 493–511.
- Huxley, Aldous ed. *An Encyclopaedia of Pacifism*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1941.
- . *Ends and Means*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1941.
- . *Eyeless in Gaza*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955.
- . *Légnadrág és Társai*. Translated by György Bálint. Budapest: Pesti Napló, 1936. Originally published as *Antic Hay* (1923).
- . *Revíziót!* Translated by Aladár Kálló. Budapest: Wollner Nyomda, 1937. Originally published as *What Are You Going to Do About It? The Case for Constructive Peace* (1936).
- . *Szép új világ*. Translated by Tivadar Szinnai. Budapest: Pantheon, 1934. Originally published as *Brave New World* (1932).
- . *The Perennial Philosophy*. London: Flamingo, 1994.
- . *A vak Sámson*. Translated by András Hevesi. Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1937. Originally published as *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936).
- . *A végzet bábjátéka*. Translated by Pál Tábori. Budapest: Nova, 1933. Originally published as *Point Counter Point* (1928).
- . *What Are You Going to Do About It?: The Case for Constructive Peace*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1936.
- Kálló, Aladár. "Előszó" [Foreword]. Introduction to *Revíziót!* by Aldous Huxley, 3–4. Budapest: Wollner Nyomda, 1937.
- Kis, Ferenc. *Fegyvertelen: Kis Ferenc versei* [Unarmed: poems by F. K.]. Budapest: Wollner Ny., 1936.
- Lukowitz, David C. "British Pacifists and Appeasement: The Peace Pledge Union." *Journal of Contemporary History* 9, no. 1 (January 1974): 115–27.
- Pugh, Michael. "Pacifism and Politics in Britain, 1931–1935." *The Historical Journal* 23, no. 3 (September 1980): 641–56.
- Rempel, Richard A. "The Dilemmas of British Pacifists During World War II." *The Journal of Modern History* 50, no. 4, On Demand Supplement (December 1978): D1213–D1229.
- Rigby, Andrew. "The Peace Pledge Union: From Peace to War, 1936–1945." In *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945*, edited by Peter Brock and Thomas P. Socknat, 169–85. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Sharp, Alan. "The Versailles Settlement: The Start of the Road to the Second World War?" In *Origins of the Second World War: An International Perspective*, edited by Frank McDonough, 15–33. London: Continuum, 2011.
- Vieira, Fátima. "The Concept of Utopia." In *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, edited by Gregory Claeys, 3–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Watt, Donald. "Introduction." In *Aldous Huxley, the Critical Heritage*, edited by Donald Watt, 1–36. London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1975.
- Zeidler, Miklós. *Ideas on Territorial Revision in Hungary, 1920–1945*. Translated by Thomas J. DeKornfeld and Helen DeKornfeld. Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Monographs, 2007.

The City in Ruins: Post-9/11 Representations of Cataclysmic New York on Film

VERA BENCZIK | EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST

Introduction

Since science fiction's¹ advent in the early nineteenth century, concerns with humanity's end have been one of the central issues thematized by the genre, abounding especially after World War II, when human self-destruction became a disturbing and looming possibility via the development of nuclear weapons and the mounting political tensions of the Cold War. These SF works, both printed and filmic, have certain things in common: they involve a cataclysmic event which brings about the epic destruction of humanity; they verbalize or visualize a collective trauma—human-induced disasters, natural catastrophes, or extra-terrestrial calamities; and depending on the scale of the catastrophe, they also narrate how humanity comes to terms with the aftermath.

Commonly referred to as apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic SF, the terminology of the imagined end points to the *eschaton* in the Book of Revelations. Yet these texts, instead of bearing witness to the termination of human history, often opt for showing ways of “surviving Armageddon,” as Mick Broderick aptly points out. In his essay on post-cataclysmic films thematizing a nuclear catastrophe, he claims that “visions of nuclear Armageddon [concern themselves] primarily with survival as its dominant discursive mode.”² James Berger, in his monograph devoted to the mode of the post-apocalypse, also comments on this paradox: “The end is never the end. The apocalyptic text describes the end of the world, but then the

¹ Henceforth abbreviated as SF.

² Mick Broderick, “Surviving Armageddon: Beyond the Imagination of Disaster” *Science Fiction Studies* 20, no. 3 (November 1993): 362.

text does not end, nor does the world represented in the text, and neither does the world itself. In nearly every apocalyptic presentation something remains *after the end*.”³

The present essay focuses on post-9/11 films which present the cataclysm and the post-apocalypse implaced⁴ in New York. The central motif analyzed will be the effects of the conjunction of the iconographies of fictional catastrophe and historical trauma, how the September 11 attacks and their aftermath influenced and re-shaped the topicalization and visualization of widespread urban destruction, especially that of Manhattan, and how a narrative of historical trauma intersects and interweaves with narratives of spatial carnage regarded as entertainment.

In the broad sense of the category, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic texts have been inscribed into Western cultural heritage through the biblical disaster narratives of Sodom and Gomorrah, and especially the story of the Flood—present in Near Eastern collective cultural memory as far back as the third millennium BC. The first extant text of the latter dates as far back as the seventeenth century BC.⁵ This early version of the cultural myth of destruction on a global scale shows vividly the downfall of humanity and its aftermath: “All the windstorms and gales arose together, and the flood swept over the . . . [section missing] After the flood had swept over the land, and waves and windstorms had rocked the huge boat for seven days and seven nights, Utu the sun god came out, illuminating heaven and earth. Zi-ud-sura could drill an opening in the huge boat and the hero Utu entered the huge boat with his rays.”⁶ Destruction,

³ James Berger, *After the End: Representations of the Post-Apocalypse* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 5–6.

⁴ I borrow this term from Edward S. Casey, who in his monograph on the re-emergence of the importance of a philosophy of space uses it in the sense of the precise spatio-temporal coordinates of a certain object. See Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 4.

⁵ The fragmentary Sumerian text originates from Nippur in the Old Babylonian era, and was published by Thorkild Jacobsen in 1982. It contains a version of the well-known Biblical Flood story, in which the divine wrath of Enlil brings about the destruction of all life, yet Ziusudra, king of Shuruppak, manages to escape via the instructions of Enki, the god of wisdom, to build a large boat, on which he gathers his family and pairs of animals. See Thorkild Jacobsen, “The Eridu Genesis,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100, no. 4 (December 1982): 513–29.

⁶ J. A. Black, et al., “The Story of the Flood,” *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*, University of Oxford, 2003–, updated October 24, 2006, segment D, lines 1–11, <http://etcsl.ox.ac.uk>.

even at this early stage of recorded human history—it was later incorporated into the Bible, and through the Scriptures into European collective cultural heritage as well—is imagined and imaged as a destruction of the urban landscape, and could well be considered part of a genre in its own Mesopotamian cultural and historical context, which often envisions divine wrath and the ensuing large-scale destruction of humanity in terms of urban devastation. Another text, “The Cursing of Agade,” details the ruination of Agade, one of the main political and military centers of third millennium BC Mesopotamia, after its ruler, Naram-Suen, unwisely lays waste to Enlil’s⁷ temple in Nippur and incurs his wrath. The narrative also resorts to imagery of urban destruction: “all the foreign lands uttered bitter cries from the walls of their cities. They . . . made gardens grow within the cities, and not as usual on the wide plain outside. As if it had been before the time when cities were built and founded . . .”⁸

The whole narrative echoes a template familiar to the description of human demise ever since, used in a varied context and for varied reasons, yet with surprisingly little variation over the millennia. The collapse of civilization and the iconography of urban destruction seem to have been linked in a distinctive narrative formula that has been utilized by SF since the nineteenth century, and has become widely popular in the cinematic mode in the twentieth century.⁹

In his classic work on the mechanisms of urban space, *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch divides the city into five different formations: *paths*, *edges*, *districts*, *nodes* and *landmarks*, whose interplay defines the navigational strategies of the “spatial practitioners” traversing its territory.¹⁰ Landmarks seem to be the most important of these features for our study. These are defined by Lynch as external “point references . . . seen from many angles and distances, over the tops of smaller elements, and used as radial references.”¹¹ Since the very early Mesopotamian examples, urban

⁷ Enlil, chief deity of the Sumerian pantheon, resided in Nippur, one of the oldest settlements in Sumer.

⁸ Black et al., “The Cursing of Agade,” *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*.

⁹ See Nick Yablon, “The Metropolitan Life in Ruins: Architectural and Fictional Speculations in New York, 1909–1919,” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (June 2004): 308–47; and Max Page, *The City’s End: Two Centuries of Fantasies, Fears, and Premonitions of New York’s Destruction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

¹⁰ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 46.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

destruction has focused on the demolition of landmarks. Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films prefer to work with “distant landmarks,” which “are usually used as points of reference by people unfamiliar with that particular city.”¹²

He remarks that these structures are “bottomless, they [have] a peculiar floating quality. . . . [They are] dominant on the general skyline, but the location and identity of their base is by no means as significant as that of their top.”¹³ Lynch’s observations of Bostonian architectural markers may be extended to most metropolitan formations and their representational presence in wider cultural memory. As Edward Casey remarks, “Buildings are among the most perspicuous instances of the thorough acculturation of places. A building condenses a culture in one place.”¹⁴ Distant landmarks seem to carry a symbolism far beyond their orientational aspect; they incorporate the essence of the city they are part of, and may stand as solitary signifiers of the urban entity they are implaced in.

In post-apocalyptic narratives the often-ruined (and hence dysfunctional) remnants of certain iconic structures evoke the spectral presence of the functional city long gone to dust. When Charlton Heston breaks down at the end of *Planet of the Apes* after having stumbled upon the broken remains of the Statue of Liberty, he not only mourns the ruined landmark, but by extension all that it stands for.¹⁵ His triumph over the alien apes of what he considers a distant, estranged planet suddenly turns to defeat when spatial distance is revealed instead to be temporal dislocation, and he abruptly finds himself transported back to the uncanny familiarity of the home he had left behind. Unlike the heroes of fairy tales who return to a once familiar home after centuries to find all familiarity gone, George Taylor (Charlton Heston) does not turn to dust upon the recognition, but is visibly shaken by the realization of his exact implacement in the universe.

Ruined landmarks persist in linking a destroyed future space to a functional present topography, connecting the *syntopia* of experiential reality and defamiliarized future via the spatial echo emanating from a shared topographical matrix: a well-known built environment is duplicated, and while the post-apocalyptic narrative depicts the destroyed or mutilated version, the intact version of the self-same building or place is supplied by the memory of the audience. The interaction within this syn-

¹² Ibid., 81.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 32.

¹⁵ See *Planet of the Apes*, dir. Franklin J. Schaffner (1968).

topic construction, between the two places which share geographical coordinates but are posited at different points in time, is what I call the spatial echo.¹⁶ The predominantly dystopian future often constructs the present as utopia, and the visual rhetoric of such films either posits the reality of the audience as overwhelmingly positive, or incorporates a pastoral layer into the future wasteland itself, resulting in a system balanced on the seemingly paradoxical coexistence of Paradise and Hell. The transformation of familiar space is an immanent part of the post-apocalyptic narrative and often manifests itself as an act of destruction. Its dynamics work along two oppositional lines: the transformation effects a radical alteration of the urban landscape, yet at the same time it also has to conserve enough semblance to the functional urban space to incur the spectral image of the absent architectural framework.

Film as a visual mode presents an optimal environment to visualize the destructive transformation of the landscape. The enigmatic playground scene in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, where Sarah Connor's (Linda Hamilton) dream vision shows the moment of the thermonuclear apocalypse transforming the utopian space of childhood into post-apocalyptic wasteland, very vividly demonstrates one of the symbolic uses of urban demolition.¹⁷ The scene opens with Sarah Connor approaching a chain-link fence, behind which there is the idyllic image of a summer playground teeming with children and their mothers, her double among them. The Los Angeles skyline functions as the scene's distant but clearly recognizable backdrop and establishes the link between the close human body and the distant architectural landmark, the image of the little girl on the swing in front of clearly identifiable buildings further adding to this effect. As the firestorm engulfs the city, burning all life to death, the shockwave of the nuclear bomb spreads, first demolishing the iconic buildings and finally blasting the charred corpses of the playground victims to small pieces. All that is left is the skeleton of a helpless Sarah Connor still clinging to the chain-link fence.

This one scene epitomizes the mechanics of apocalyptic visual rhetoric in several ways. For one, Sarah Connor embodies the audience as the (helpless) onlooker, although the powerless gaze directed at the on-

¹⁶ For more details, see Vera Benczik, "Re/membering Now: The Doubling of Space in Post-Apocalyptic Dystopian Narratives," in *Re/membering Place*, ed. André Dodeman and Catherine Delmas (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013).

¹⁷ See *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, dir. James Cameron (1991).

screen catastrophe does not result in the destruction of the viewer; where the chain-link fence functions as a porous screen, the movie screen is an impermeable boundary between the audience's reality and cinematic fiction. It also displays the sequentiality of the spatial echo, and posits the viewers through the viewpoint of Sarah Connor into the horror of losing their functional reality to a terrible disfunctional future. But above all, through its projection of body onto architecture, it effects the amalgamation of human and building, and shows how the destruction of the latter also entails the former. While this constellation is textualized in the playground scene in all its gruesomeness, many (post-)apocalyptic films only retain the architectural layer, which by symbolic extension also comes to include the destruction of the body. This may be one of the reasons for the distress inherent in such narratives, as viewers, confronted by the ruination of a familiar urban space, also add large-scale human demise, including their own deaths, to the equation.

Yet horror is by far not the only emotion that such scenes induce. The visualization of large-scale urban devastation also evokes a sinister joy in the audience. In her fundamental essay "The Imagination of Disaster," Susan Sontag, while acknowledging the fact that SF disaster films "reflect world-wide anxieties, and they serve to allay them," also draws attention to the aesthetics of destruction which provide gruesome entertainment while possessing their own sublime grandeur.¹⁸ This has not changed since the essay's publication in 1965. The cataclysmic visions are projections of contemporary society's collective fears—millenarian anxieties, Cold War paranoia, or the germophobia of the 1980s all find their ways into the respective period's films. But they also function as entertainment and cater to the fetishization and pleasure of destruction, an enthrallment with architectural decay commonly called "ruin porn."¹⁹ The pleasure of witnessing large-scale metropolitan destruction again derives from the positioning of the viewer outside the narrative, and at once into the position of the survivor, so central to the mode according to Broderick.

Beyond their entertainment value and inherent critical focus, James Berger argues that, due to their subject matter and the mode of depiction, these narratives may provide the symbolic language to enable rep-

¹⁸ Susan Sontag, "The Imagination of Disaster," *Commentary* (October 1965): 44.

¹⁹ Shayari De Silva, "Beyond Ruin Porn: What's Behind Our Obsession with Decay?," *Arch Daily*, August 15, 2014, accessed February 28, 2015, <http://www.archdaily.com/537712/beyond-ruin-porn-what-s-behind-our-obsession-with-decay/>.

resentation of various traumas, to “fill the gap that trauma has crashed through.”²⁰ By way of their simultaneous proximity to empirical reality and distance from it through defamiliarization, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic works provide the framework to act as textual or visual representations of collective traumas like the world wars or the Holocaust, for instance. The distinct iconography of destruction, which by the end of the twentieth century had become formulaic, ensures a safe environment of ritual repetition to narrativize trauma—a phenomenon that by definition denies representation—and to verbalize the incommunicable wounds that fester in the collective memory of society.

While guaranteeing the safety of the audience via their fictionality, the iconographic proximity to real-life catastrophes delivered by (post-)apocalyptic films also ensures a direct referential relationship between historical reality and fictional future, especially through the syntopic connection of images of past spatial carnage—photographs of Budapest landmarks like the Chain Bridge, destroyed during World War II, for example—and their present intact counterpart. Hungarian viewers do not need the photograph of the present, intact bridge overlayed over the iconic representation of urban demise, as many can supply a version of that landmark from memory. The two images contain points of convergence that make the bridge identifiable in the first place. But they also have points of divergence—the destroyed parts of the bridge, and the skeleton of the Buda Castle behind it on the hill, with the spatial echo emerging from this interspatial dialogue. This image works in all its uncanniness because the viewer is able to provide and overlay it with the memory of an existing, functional landmark, and the resulting visual palimpsest works with mechanisms that render it similar to the visual rhetoric of (post-)apocalyptic urban destruction.²¹

While visual representations of historical catastrophes signify points in the past, the palimpsest of present and future contains the echo of a history that has not yet come about, the complicated temporal relation-

²⁰ Berger, *After the End*, 28.

²¹ Demolished bridges were frequently used in (post-)apocalyptic scenarios, both in print and on film: the 1950 August 5 issue of *Colliers Magazine* features a truncated version of the Brooklyn Bridge to illustrate the destructive force of a nuclear holocaust. Bridges, which function as connective tissue within the urban fabric, are ideal in symbolizing recognizable disfunctionality: the pillars are retained most often, and the connecting parts destroyed, thus divesting the building of all its utility, and render it a monument to civilizational doom.

ship called “future anterior” by Nick Yablon.²² The audience is put in the interesting position of simultaneously existing as present and as part of historical memory. Thus the ruins of the future become monuments to the transience of being, and our mortality echoes in and is magnified by the distorted architecture of the future. Returning to the image of the Budapest Chain Bridge, I would go as far as to suggest that to many of us, the ruin of the bridge not only evokes the historical trauma of WWII, but also the wasteland of the post-apocalypse. By regarding the image of the destroyed bridge and constructing it into a coherent narrative, we use not only our knowledge of the intact landmark and the historical event, but also the formulaic visual practices of the disaster SF film. The iconography of trauma, which denies representation, thus overlaps with the cataclysmic iconography that acts as a symbolic language making trauma presentable.

The present essay explores this selfsame overlap of historical trauma, fictional representation, and viewer memory with regard to the events of 9/11. I will try to analyze what happens when the iconography of trauma, which constructs the destruction of New York into a taboo, simultaneously overlaps with iconography that makes trauma representable. How does the City come to ruins again after 9/11, and in what ways does the narrative of the terrorist attacks surface in these films? I am going to look at this process through the examples of two films, *I Am Legend* (2006) and *Cloverfield* (2008).²³

By 2001, urban devastation had become one of the best-known visual clichés in SF disaster movies, and New York has been one of most frequently destroyed cities since the end of the nineteenth century.²⁴ A symbol of industrialization and technological progress, its destruction became a means to criticize the projected downsides of fervent social change, as Nick Yablon argues.²⁵ Its universal visibility also rendered the City as a favorite site for the panoptic spectacle of cataclysmic destruction, and the imagery of distant, demolished landmarks of New York established itself as a visual commonplace of the apocalyptic imagination. After the constant presence of disaster movies throughout the twentieth century, the 1990s saw a surge of the genre; visual effects enabled the spectacular representation of urban destruction, and the films certainly catered to the

²² Yablon, “The Metropolitan Life in Ruins,” 312.

²³ See *I Am Legend*, dir. Francis Lawrence (2007); and *Cloverfield*, dir. Matt Reeves (2008).

²⁴ Page, *The City's End*, 4.

²⁵ Yablon, “The Metropolitan Life in Ruins,” 317–19.

millennial fears of the movie-going audiences while providing an entertaining display of global havoc. From 1996 to 1998 alone, New York was destroyed in four international blockbusters: *Independence Day* (1996), *Godzilla* (1998), *Deep Impact* (1998), and *Armageddon* (1998).²⁶

September 11 was not only a catastrophe which shook the world, but one that was also mediated globally and aestheticized visually. The live broadcast of the second plane hitting the World Trade Center, the collapsing towers, the rescue efforts, and the aftermath created the visual media rhetoric of the catastrophe, and present an overlap not only in the iconography of real and fictitious trauma but also in the medium that served as transmitter of the events. The images of the burning towers, people jumping and falling from its windows, and the ruins in the aftermath were not only pictures but photographic compositions with their own gruesome aesthetics.

Through its focusing the visual representation of disaster on the destruction of distant landmarks, while for reasons of decency refraining from showing human death in its graphic details—and thus metaphorically linking the fall of buildings to the destruction of human bodies—this imagery conflated with the imagery of the disaster film. The immediate result was the intrusion of the apocalyptic formula into the narrative of 9/11, as survivors and witnesses recurrently defined their experiences as having been part of a disaster movie.²⁷ One witness remarked “I stood there for a second in total awe, and then said, ‘What the F_____?’ I honestly thought it was Hollywood.”²⁸ But this linkage inevitably also led to the retrospective incursion of the events of 9/11 into the fictitious narratives of the apocalypse. Regulated by the spatial echo, the relationship between audience and narrative acquired another participant: narratives of the destroyed City echoed with the narrative of 9/11. Through the shared iconography, the 2001 terror attacks on the World Trade Center transformed the image of New York in ruins from the fictitious visual spectacle

²⁶ See *Independence Day*, dir. Roland Emmerich (1996); *Godzilla*, dir. Roland Emmerich (1998); *Deep Impact*, dir. Mimi Leder (1998); and *Armageddon*, dir. Michael Bay (1998).

²⁷ Allison Young, *The Scene of Violence: Cinema, Crime, Affect* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 105.

²⁸ Jim Lucy, “Broadway Electrical Supply’s Jeff Birnbaum recounts his experience as an EMT at the World Trade Center on 9–11,” *September 11, 2001: Special Report on the Tragedy’s Effect on the Electrical Industry*, February 13, 2002, accessed March 1, 2015, http://911research.wtc7.net/cache/wtc/evidence/account_birnbaum.htm.

of the entertainment industry into a sacred text, inviolable and unrepresentable as an act of enjoyment. The “unofficial self-censorship” of the entertainment industry promptly removed disaster movies from television for several months following the attacks and halted the production of (post-)apocalyptic blockbusters for some time.²⁹ These measures were all logical in the light of the events and the large-scale traumatization in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. What I am interested in is how the 9/11 attacks influenced the visual rhetoric of the (post-)apocalyptic disaster movies after their production resumed.

Films produced after 9/11 had to take this new sensibility into account, and although major films featuring urban destruction were produced, the movies tended to avoid the destruction of New York altogether.³⁰ *The Day After Tomorrow*, released in 2004, was the first major post-9/11 disaster movie centered in New York. While the film uses New York as the main site of action, it retains the City architecturally intact, and the tidal wave which engulfs Manhattan flows through and around the buildings, leaving them unharmed. The radical drop in temperatures freezes the partially submerged City, thus pointedly conserving the urban landscape unbroken and unimpaired for the future. Los Angeles, on the other hand, is brutally ravaged by monstrous giant tornadoes that destroy a large part of the city, leaving it in stark contrast to the pristine state of Manhattan. New York is spared, but metropolitan space in general is not, and this may point to the fact that after a certain time 9/11 sensibilities did not apply to the enjoyable ruination of architectural landmarks in general, but remained geographically restricted to the specific location of Manhattan. “The aesthetics of destruction” remained a pleasurable spectacle, as long as the taboo of New York in ruins was not violated.³¹ It was not until three years later that filmmakers ventured to bring the apocalypse to New York again. In the last part of my essay I am going to analyze *I Am Legend* and *Cloverfield* with special attention to (post-)apocalyptic spatial politics, exploring how they relate to the narrative of 9/11 and how they incorporate this narrative into their own text.

I Am Legend (henceforth *Legend*), based on the 1954 novel of Richard Matheson, was released in 2007. The film is a classic robinsonade, or a last-man narrative in SF terms, with a lonely man and his sidekick, the

²⁹ Page, *The City's End*, 204.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 219.

³¹ Sontag, “The Imagination of Disaster,” 44.

German Shephard Samantha (Sam), stranded on a desert island—Manhattan, in this case. Humanity has been destroyed by a bioengineered virus, and the epidemic's epicentre is also Manhattan—those who survived the disease have been transformed into nocturnal zombie-like creatures.³² Virologist Robert Neville, played by Will Smith, is immune to the virus, and spends his time in Manhattan fighting the zombies while working on an antidote to the disease. Kirk Boyle is of the opinion that *Legend* glorifies a “utopian fantasy of late capitalism,” which is seemingly supported by the pastoral daytime existence of Neville in an urban landscape reclaimed by nature, a collective “romantic ruin” in Simmel's sense of the word, complete with idyllic scenes of hunting and gathering in the late summer sunshine of the island.³³ Yet I would argue that this seeming pastoral perfection is counterbalanced and dismantled by two layers of traumatic shadow. On the one hand, the rhythmic analeptic incursions of the immediate pre-cataclysm events neatly counter the utopian void with their scenes of

³² Matheson's novel has vampire-like beings that result from a viral infection; apart from the shared sensitivity to light, the film's “others” are portrayed as subhuman—lacking speech, clothing, or any other paraphernalia commonly linked to “civilization.” Matheson's others live in a highly organized society, and have constructed their own high-level cultural narrative. It is only the protagonist who perceives them as monsters, and hunts the creatures until his final epiphany, which makes him realize that they only represent a transformed, yet fully functional human society. He also recognizes the fact that his atavistic existence has been narrativized by this society into the legendary figure of the bogeyman, who is used to frighten the vampire children into obedience. After coming to terms with his “legendary”—hence the title—status, he finally readily submits to the punishment for having murdered what he now perceives to be human beings. This intercultural sensitivity and self-reflexivity had been written into *Legend* at first, where Will Smith's character realizes the conscious motivations of the infected zombies, and releases the captive infected woman he was experimenting on. Audiences at the test screenings prior to the film's release in 2007 disliked this ending, and a new ending was shot, which also became the canonical ending for the theatrical versions of the movie, in which Neville dies by sacrificing himself for a surviving woman and child and the discovered antidote, while taking out the emphatically non-human zombies in the process. One of the reasons behind this more stereotypical presentation of a threatening and monstrous “otherness” may be that the audience, used to a polarized depiction of the terrorist antagonists in the “War on Terror,” felt ill at ease with humanizing antagonists.

³³ Kirk Boyle, “Children of Men and I Am Legend: The Disaster-capitalism Complex Hits Hollywood,” *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 51 (2009).

human chaos, the personal dimension of Neville's family tragedy,³⁴ and their setting in a winter pre-Christmas New York. A synchronic layer that underlies the initial utopian surface is presented by the haunting implications of a monstrous presence in the dark places. This presence, at first only hinted at by Neville's concern with sunset, acts as a clear caesura marking the urban landscape as a site of taboo, and is gradually revealed as the nocturnal zombie victims of the virus. The arbitrary irruptions of the monstrous subtext into the intact urban surface gradually reveal the utopian construct of the post-apocalyptic urban jungle as a façade behind which Neville hides to avoid his own disintegration.

In the 2008 film *Cloverfield*, New York is besieged by a Godzilla-like monster that destroys a large part of Manhattan and is presumably only stopped by a nuclear strike obliterating much of the island. The viewer follows the flight and decimation of a small group of friends through a demolished Manhattan. The film uses a handheld camera as mediator of the events, and thus maintains the proximity of the audience to the events. It also comments on the excessive media-coverage of catastrophes in recent years, although the film is still set before the constant presence of smartphone documentation of both private and public events. The narrative uses the romantic "dramedy" as its starting mode,³⁵ and the generic duality—romantic film and disaster movie—is retained throughout the film, partially through the love story of the protagonists Rob and Beth, and partially through the fragments of an earlier recording of a date interrupting randomly into the documentation of the cataclysm. It is interesting to see how both films fragment their own narrative with diegetic incursions of a pre-trauma text, with very similar effects: the diachronic duality is intertwined in a nonlinear way, establishing a temporal (*Cloverfield*) and spatial echo (*Legend*), yet the nature of the combination of the two narrative layers results in the fragmentation of the narrative present. In my opinion, these irruptions work more effectively in *Cloverfield* than in *Legend*, because in the former the layers are also divided along the line of plot categories—the past as romantic comedy, the present as disaster

³⁴ The film gradually reveals that Neville's wife and daughter fell victim to the evacuation of Manhattan when the spread of the disease effected the lockdown of the island.

³⁵ The boy meets girl, boy (apparently) is about to lose girl scenario, which invokes an archetypal fairy tale formula that inevitably prefigures a happy ending after trials and journeys, is quite brutally dismantled here by the not-so-happy ending of the disaster narrative.

film—and thus a synthesis of the two layers becomes technically impossible. *Legend*, on the other hand combines two chronologically separate accounts which are related through the narrative, and thus the effect works much more along the lines of the spatial echo.

Due to their chronological and iconographic proximity to 9/11, both films have to address the terrorist attacks and their aftermath, and both may be read as commentaries on the possibility of narrativizing trauma in different ways. The locus of trauma in both cases is Manhattan, and following the formula of disaster movies, personal and collective trauma are closely interwoven to ensure the intimacy of audience involvement and the global perspective on universal human destruction.

Both films use the topography of 9/11's events, but while *Legend* retains the city architecturally intact—although constructed into a romantic, vegetation-claimed ruin by the passage of time—*Cloverfield* returns destruction on a large scale to Manhattan. Another interesting difference is in their respective viewpoints and their effects. The opening shots of *Legend* use the panoptic viewpoint adopted by many disaster movies to more effectively visualize urban devastation, yet the film avoids any spectacular wreckage. It is a disaster movie's viewpoint without the iconography of disaster itself. Destruction constitutes an absence in the narrative, save for the ruins of Manhattan's destroyed bridges—echoing the countless images of mutilated bridgework—blown up by the military to seal off the island from the mainland, a failed attempt at containing the virus. Ruination in this context is the absence of people: the empty city as a topos has been part of the post-apocalyptic canon since the end of the nineteenth century, with H. G. Wells's empty London in *War of the Worlds* as one of the most illustrative examples. *Legend's* daytime Manhattan does not have dying aliens, but demonstrates the uncanniness of a dysfunctional urban landscape through its lack of human activity, estranged even further by Neville's attempts to people certain spaces by mannequins, arranged as stand-ins for the absent population. As inanimate simulacra they are both immobile and easy to control, and again emphasize the artificial, constructed nature of the daytime pastoral idyll.³⁶ Control is one of the key concepts of the film, and serves as the overwhelming presence in all of Neville's daytime activities: his obsessive mapping of the island's "natural

³⁶ One of the turning points in the movie comes when the zombies rearrange those mannequins. This leaves Neville baffled as he begins to doubt his memory and sanity, rejecting outright any possibility of agency of the infected humans.

resources,” the ordering of the gathered food on his kitchen shelves, and his maintaining strict alphabetical order in the borrowing of the DVDs seemingly all tie in with his efforts to maintain order and to keep up a semblance of a functional urban space. This thin and threadbare illusion of a working, inhabited Manhattan comes complete with pre-apocalypse taped news programs, which Neville watches during dinner.

Yet the urge to control and its various manifestations may also be read as obsessive-compulsive behaviour symptomatic of post-traumatic stress disorder. The apparent harmony of the daytime robinsonade is offset by several things: the mannequins do not engage in the conversation Neville attempts to initiate, the taped programs show a pre-Christmas New York in stark contrast with the summer of the empty City, and the cans on Neville’s kitchen shelves radiate a mania instead of a simple orderliness. This neat efficiency is also present in the underground laboratory—a nod to the gothic figure of the mad scientist—where Neville works on the antidote, experimenting on zombified rats and humans alike.³⁷ Another symptomatic element is his obsessive foraging for anything usable, in which he marks examined buildings with an X. A closer look at his map suggests an interesting link between trauma, 9/11, and the film’s spatial rhetoric. We can see that his center of operations is Hudson Square in Tribeca, with tidy Xs marking the houses examined. The World Trade Center site is just south of this area, undiscernible as it is covered by Neville’s hand. It is not there per se, yet its absence is so conspicuous that the covering hand acts as just as obvious a marker as the Xs that designate the inspected buildings.

Another interesting link that connects the human element to place is the recurrent 9/11 terminology which Neville uses to designate what has happened. “This is Ground Zero. This is my site. I can still fix this,” is repeated twice in the course of the movie, referring to both the personal and the collective trauma implaced in New York.³⁸ While “ground zero” is a recurring phrase in the rhetoric of 9/11, referring to the World Trade Center area, “site” spatializes an abstract cataclysm: the virus becomes a place and the place is Manhattan. And Manhattan devoid of its inhabitants is turned into a corpse, dissected by its only remaining human resident according to a rigid pattern as he searches the area very near to

³⁷ The headshots of his past—dead—subjects are arranged in a neat tableau on the wall, an image which disturbingly recalls the mugshots of Jewish Holocaust victims lining the wall at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

³⁸ *I Am Legend* (2007).

Ground Zero for anything useful, yet avoids and even conceals the area with the most traumatic connotations. The last human in New York, fuelled by his post-traumatic stress disorder, actively erases the spatial markers of 9/11 from the panoramic view of the visual representation of urban space. Despite the verbal affirmation of the protagonist to “fix” the situation, Neville remains imprisoned in his trauma: the repetition denies progress, and the destroyed bridges act as symbols of total geographical and personal isolation. Projected upon the narrative of 9/11, *Legend* concludes that trauma remains unrepresentable for those who survive. In my view, this position is further underlined by the audience’s preference for the second theatrical ending, which features Neville’s death and the confirmation of the zombified humans as an unambiguously evil force (see note 32 for further details).

As opposed to the pristine, yet spectral architectural intactness of New York in *Legend*, *Cloverfield* recapitulates the demolition, but disavows the panoptic viewpoint: it restricts the spectacle to the ground, and confines it within the limited frame of the handheld camera throughout the narrative. Terror irrupts into mundane existence as a distant nighttime explosion, flagged immediately by one of the protagonists as a possible terrorist attack, signalling that the sound of thunder has lost its innocence in the City once and for all, and may only be narrativized in terms of malevolent agency. Sound is followed by visual and physical disruption, as the head of the Statue of Liberty crashes into the street, ricocheting off a skyscraper. It is this scene that Robert Arp and Patricia Brace call “the scene most directly visually quoted from 9/11,” with all its symbolic connotations, and it is followed by the appearance of the monster as the cause of all the havoc, and its godzillaesque rampage through the streets of New York begins.³⁹ The film makes use of the visual clichés of (post-)apocalyptic architectural ruination—Brooklyn Bridge is again destroyed—yet it also clearly utilizes the iconography specific to 9/11. One of the characters, for example, lives at the top of twin towers in the process of collapsing, and this particular segment of the narrative chronicles the protagonists’ effort to rescue her from certain death in her upper-storey apartment. The two buildings leaning into each other act as direct visual triggers to the events of the falling World Trade Center towers, and their destruction

³⁹ Arp, Robert and Patricia Brace, “Cloverfield, Super 8, and the Morality of Terrorism,” in *The Philosophy of J. J. Abrams*, ed. Robert Arp and Patricia Brace (Lexington, Ky.: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014), 300.

serves as a reiteration of the 2001 catastrophe. As opposed to *Legend*, *Cloverfield* does not try to deny the existence of the terrorist attacks on New York, but instead directly invokes it in its visual rhetoric. The film does not only point to the traumatic historic event as the epicenter of post-9/11 disaster visuality, but also attempts to construct a visual rhetoric to narrativize the unrepresentable real-life trauma.

Both films utilize the format of news broadcasts, another feature of 9/11's visual representation, although in different ways. *Legend* uses news footage as a link to the vanished past, and as a symptomatic repetition of the pre-trauma events through recordings that Neville watches in his post-trauma world. The news broadcasts present an idyllic pre-Christmas City and avoid mention of the cataclysm altogether, eradicating the point of trauma as a narratable media event, just as Neville's hand blocks out Ground Zero on the map. The fragmented narrative of *Cloverfield* contains several instances of the televised live news coverage of the catastrophe, doubly estranged as it is mediated through the hand-held camera. As opposed to the panoramic viewpoint of *Legend*, where distance provides safety, *Cloverfield* interjects the hand-held camera between audience and horror, and the feeling of security is heightened by narrativization. As the witnesses of 9/11 resorted to the comfort of the disaster narrative in telling their story, the viewer of *Cloverfield* is catapulted to a proleptic point of the narrative by the act of watching the footage that has survived.

This temporal and visual isolation ensures the distance needed to enjoy the spectacle, and the level of estrangement enables the narrative to reference the 2001 events without triggering disturbing reactions. The fabric of the film is suffused with other allusions, all using the spatial echo between 9/11 New York and the City under attack from a monster via the specific shared iconography of cataclysmic spatial practice: the panic in the streets, people covered in ash, the heroic efforts of firefighters, and military and medical personnel are all direct quotes from the 9/11 narrative. The shaky camera technique emphasizes the intimate, private viewpoint of the civilian victim, yet also comments on the obsession with documentation. "People need to see this," says Hud (T. J. Miller), who operates the hand-held camera during most of the movie, implying our fixation with visuals.⁴⁰ Oral testimonials have become insufficient; bearing witness means the visual recording of events, which, apart from the safety the interpolated

⁴⁰ Much of the footage was actually filmed by the actor playing Hud. Arp and Brace, "Cloverfield, Super 8, and the Morality of Terrorism," 299.

screen provides, also acts as a means to postpone experiencing the trauma by rewriting catastrophe into a visual spectacle for the present.

Counter to generic conventions, neither film is a narrative of survival in Broderick's sense, as both Neville and presumably all the main characters in *Cloverfield* die. The viewer is put into the position of remaining alive without a referent from the filmic narratives, reiterating the position of surviving 9/11 as a non-involved witness. On the intranarrative level, the characters' deaths naturally deny both bearing witness to and the possibility to process trauma. Yet they may enable it for the viewer, partly through the shared urban landscape of fictitious and factual catastrophe, and partly through the common iconography of disaster. And while both films resolve trauma on a global level—Neville manages to manufacture the vaccine against the virus, and the monster is destroyed at the cost of obliterating the island of Manhattan—resolution on a personal level is denied. Instead of being seen as testimonies to heroic survival, both films may be seen as visual memorials to the victims of 9/11.

In conclusion, we could say that Hollywood has been uneasy with New York in ruins ever since 2001. While the taboo of destroying New York was gradually lifted, the interfacing iconographies of trauma and entertainment made the use of the City as a locus of a cataclysmic event highly problematic. All such (post-)apocalyptic films, connected by the shared topography, are haunted by the events of 9/11: in addition to being a visual means to represent trauma, they also function as a reiteration of a traumatic event. The resolution to this conflict comes only via appropriating the rhetoric of 9/11 and incorporating its narrative of trauma directly into narratives of imagined disaster. These films then manifest the uncanny duality of simultaneously being monuments to the pleasure of destruction and memorials to the catastrophe of 9/11.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arp, Robert, and Patricia Brace. "Cloverfield, Super 8, and the Morality of Terrorism." In *The Philosophy of J. J. Abrams*, edited by Robert Arp and Patricia Brace, 293–312. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014.
- Armageddon*. Directed by Michael Bay. 1998.
- Benczik, Vera. "Re/membering Now: The doubling of Space in Post-Apocalyptic Dystopian Narratives." In *Re/membering Place*, edited by André Dodeman and Catherine Delmas, 327–40. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013.
- Berger, James. *After the End: Representations of the Post-Apocalypse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

- Black, J. A., Eleanor Robson, G. Cunningham, E. Fluckiger-Hawker, and Gábor Zólyomi. *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*. <http://etcsl.ox.ac.uk>.
- Boyle, Kirk. "Children of Men and I Am Legend: The Disaster-capitalism Complex Hits Hollywood." *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 51 (2009).
- Broderick, Mick. "Surviving Armageddon: Beyond the Imagination of Disaster." *Science Fiction Studies* 20, no. 3 (November 1993): 362–82.
- Casey, Edward S. *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Cloverfield*. Directed by Matt Reeves. 2008.
- De Silva, Shayari. *Beyond Ruin Porn: What's Behind Our Obsession with Decay?* August 15, 2014. <http://www.archdaily.com/537712/beyond-ruin-porn-what-s-behind-our-obsession-with-decay/> (accessed February 28, 2015).
- Deep Impact*. Directed by Mimi Leder. 1998.
- Godzilla*. Directed by Roland Emmerich. 1998.
- I Am Legend*. Directed by Francis Lawrence. 2007.
- Independence Day*. Directed by Roland Emmerich. 1996.
- Jacobsen, Thorkild. "The Eridu Genesis." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100, no. 4 (December 1982): 513–29.
- Leslie Hamilton Gearren. 2008. http://terminator.wikia.com/wiki/Leslie_Hamilton_Gearren (accessed 02 26, 2014).
- Lucy, Jim. *Broadway Electrical Supply's Jeff Birnbaum recounts his experience as an EMT at the World Trade Center on 9–11*. February 13, 2002. http://911research.wtc7.net/cache/wtc/evidence/account_birnbaum.htm (accessed March 1, 2015).
- Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960.
- Page, Max. *The City's End: Two Centuries of Fantasies, Fears, and Premonitions of New York's Destruction*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Planet of the Apes*. Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner. 1968.
- Sontag, Susan. "The Imagination of Disaster." *Commentary*, October 1965: 42–48.
- Yablon, Nick. "The Metropolitan Life in Ruins: Architectural and Fictional Speculations in New York, 1909–1919." *American Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (June 2004): 308–47.
- Young, Allison. *The Scene of Violence: Cinema, Crime, Affect*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Realism and Utopianism Reconsidered: A Political Theoretical Reading of *A Song of Ice and Fire**

ZOLTÁN GÁBOR SZÚCS | CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES,
HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Introduction

George R. R. Martin's fantasy book series, *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1996–, followed by the *Game of Thrones* TV series based on the books, 2011–) was critically acclaimed as a dystopian depiction of a world of dynastic wars, civil discontents, and feudal feuds. Its plot is centered around power hunger, violence, conspiracies, and treachery. Not surprisingly, many reviewers welcomed the series as a textbook example of Machiavellian political realism.

Self-contradictory as it may seem, a story of imagined lands, decade-long winters, zombies, magic, and dragons proves to be markedly realistic, at least in comparison with the classics of the fantasy genre, especially J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. How can this be possible? If political realism, in a nutshell, is the refutation of the Kantian assertion that “all politics must bend its knee before right,”¹ then Tolkien's novels may justly be described as representing Kant's ideal, while Martin's books present us a world where “might is right.” Most of Martin's characters would readily concur with the crude sincerity of the Athenians recorded in Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, an unsurpassed classic of realist thinking, that “you know as well as we do that when we are talking on the human plane questions of justice only arise when there is equal power to compel: in terms of practicality the dominant exact what they can and the weak concede what they must.”²

* This essay was written as a contribution to The Paradox of Realism project (National Research, Development and Innovation Office – NKFIH K 117041).

¹ Immanuel Kant, “Toward Perpetual Peace,” in *Practical Philosophy*, ed. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 347.

² Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. Mark Hammond, ed. P. J. Rhodes, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 302.

Put another way, Tolkien's utopian world is based on "justice" (even if there is a never-ending war between good and evil, and the good is not always on the winning side), while the central question of Martin's dystopian novels is the fragility of political "order." According to Bernard Williams, justice is the trademark of political moralism, while order is the preoccupation of political realism. As he puts it, order is "the first political question."³ Looking beyond the similar-looking surfaces of the two series, both with their magic and monsters, we find a substantial difference between the morally grounded order of Middle-earth and the inherent political instability of Westeros. In this sense, it really might be reasonable to characterize Martin's series as a piece of political realism.

Still, we may find it very hard to accept that a dystopian fantasy novel be described as "realist," all the more so since political realism seems to be obsessed with reality and showing distrust toward any forms of utopianism. The most famous political realist, Niccolò Machiavelli, writing around the same time as Thomas More wrote his *Utopia*, compiled a little masterpiece of realist thinking, *The Prince*, in which he asserted that "many writers have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen nor known to exist in reality." However, his only concern was "the effectual truth of the matter."⁴ Similarly, the classic modern thinker Max Weber said in his essay about "objectivity" in social sciences that "the type of social science in which we are interested is an empirical science [*Wirklichkeitswissenschaft*] of concrete reality."⁵ But perhaps the most characteristic depiction of the realist approach to dealing with reality is the nineteenth-century German historian Leopold Ranke's dictum that history must discuss the past "wie es eigentlich gewesen" (how it really was).⁶ These examples suggest that the only legitimate science of politics is one that consists of facts as they actually happened in reality. There is something at the very heart of realist thinking that seems to resist the possibility of a realist utopia. Although a dystopia (*A Song of Ice and Fire*,

³ Bernard Williams, "Moralism and Realism in Political Theory," in *In the Beginning Was the Deed*, ed. Geoffrey Hawthorn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2007), 3.

⁴ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, new ed., trans. Peter Bondanella, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 53.

⁵ Max Weber, *On the Methodology of the Social Sciences*, ed. E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), 72.

⁶ Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, n.d.), 73.

for example) might be seen as an explicit rejection of the utopianism of the utopian genre, as long as a dystopia is still a specific form of utopia, it remains a question as to whether there is any possibility of reconciling political realism and utopia even in a dystopian form.

In light of this disagreement, should we consider the unequivocally realist features of *A Song of Ice and Fire* as merely exploiting age-old clichés of political thinking in order to intrigue readers and increase sales, thereby denying any relevance of these novels to political theory? As we saw, both possible answers can draw support from the genre and the political realist tradition. However, as I will argue, in reality there is much less distance between a fictional depiction of a world of political instability and a realist science of politics than is suggested by the political realists themselves. Thus, it would be unfair to exclude even a fantasy novel from the legitimate subjects of a theoretical discussion of political realism.

Moreover, a fantasy novel may even teach us important lessons about the nature and limits of political realism. A science of “concrete reality” and a fantasy world are different sides of the same coin in a certain respect: both assume exceptionally clear-cut boundaries between “the effectual truth of the matter” and republics and principalities “never known or seen.”

As regards realist thinking, since political reality is always messy and confusing, and a lot of it happens hidden from our eyes, we should take the words of the realists at face value if we are to learn how the political world actually works. Realist thinking always attributes some kind of superior knowledge of the world to the realist thinker, while the reader is required to accept his or her intimate familiarity with the true facts hidden from the outsider’s view. There has been a long tradition of some kind of “I know better because I saw it myself” mentality in political realism. Already Thucydides, an unsuccessful Athenian politician of the age of the Peloponnesian War, was supposedly a witness of most of the tragic occurrences he wrote about; Machiavelli was a diplomat of the Florentine Republic; Francesco Guicciardini, his friend, yet another diplomat, and so on. The somewhat dubious twentieth-century realist thinker, Bertrand de Jouvenel, the son of a distinguished French statesman and a close observer of politics himself, expressed this attitude exceptionally clearly when, in writing in the preface of *The Pure Theory of Politics* about his methods, he stated,

Quoting is very pleasurable; moreover it gives a scholarly look: in this case it would have been deceitful, a borrowing of respectable authorities to cloak the foolhardiness of my venture. It seems more honest to admit

that observation has afforded me my material. Born in a political *milieu*, having lived through an age rife with political occurrences, I saw my material forced upon me. . . . While instances from contemporary events crowded my mind, I have avoided referring to them whenever possible because there is a lack of agreement on their interpretation.⁷

Put bluntly, the realist knows better, and does not have a taste for debating various possible interpretations of historical events. Instead, he demands our blind faith in his perspective.

A very similar thing happens when we begin to read a fantasy novel. Because nothing in the novel is true to any degree, we have to make a pact with the writer, suspend our disbelief, and accept the author's lies as if all were true.

In both cases we need to place an odd trust in the word of a total stranger, an act that is much less surprising in the case of fiction than that of political realism, because to accept something as if it were true is less demanding than to accept something as true. The demand to accept anything we are told is ironically quite the opposite of what we would expect from a theory full of deep mistrust and paranoia, and we should take the consequences of this apparent contradiction between different elements of the political realism very seriously. As it happens, this contradiction is something that can be more easily grasped by the help of an altogether fictional story. The illusion of reality casts a dark shadow on realist theory—too dark actually to see through when we read about events that happened in reality. Fiction offers a quicker and more solid way to get to the theoretical limitations of realism, because through it there is no question of what is real, and what is not.

Realism and Anti-utopianism

There are a number of good reasons for a realist to dislike utopianism. A utopia is the perfect antithesis of how realists like to look at their world. A utopia depicts a land that never existed, but still demands us to accept that it can be a model for reality. A utopia depicts a society where harmony and consensus rule, and presents it as a norm for our conflict-ridden

⁷ Bertrand de Jouvenel, *The Pure Theory of Politics* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2000), xi–xii.

reality. A utopia depicts institutions that can effectively maintain political stability, but placing it into a utopian setting eludes an explanation of how these would be possible in reality. A utopia depicts people who tend to cooperate with each other, rationally (or at least benevolently) resolve their disagreements, and share a vision of a common good, but never have to face with essentially contested values, corruption, strong rivalries, or disruptive passions.

Realists think that utopianism is descriptively wrong (that is why any non-realist account of political reality can be practically labeled as “utopian”) and normatively dangerous (hence their hatred of utopian thinking). Contemporary realist political theory aims its cannons at John Rawls’s theory of justice and liberal political philosophy. As William A. Galston stated in “Realism in Political Theory,” realists think that contemporary liberalism fails to provide a proper understanding of politics, because it attempts to establish external (moral and legal) standards for politics and ignores the specific circumstances and rules of political action. This evasion of a basic political understanding leaves modern democracies without any effective ideological underpinning.⁸ Some decades earlier, interwar critics of international law formulated a very similar accusation when they asserted that it was naïve to believe in the very possibility of an international legal order that would prevent any future wars. From this criticism emerged the new discipline of international relations, with Hans Morgenthau, one of the fiercest critiques of liberal international law, as a founding father of the new science of international politics. Realist international political theorists believed that only well-defined national interests, a system of balance of power, and skilled statesmanship could secure peace and order, not rationalistic prescriptions.⁹ To look even further back in history, in the middle of the bloody seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes was convinced that skepticism and rhetoric was responsible for the weakening of political authority and the subsequent civil discontents. His *Leviathan* was a somewhat bizarre enterprise aimed at putting an end to an age of uncertainty and instability by claiming the exclusive right of marshalling political conflicts for the sovereign.¹⁰

⁸ William Galston, “Realism in Political Theory,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9, no. 4 (2010): 387.

⁹ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (London: Latimer House, 1947), 16.

¹⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin, Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 110.

Utopianism, liberalism, liberal international law, rationalism, skepticism, and so on share the same mistakes and come under the same criticism from the point of view of political realism: they fail to understand real human nature, the real principles of human coexistence, and consequently set a false standard against which to judge the truly existing world of politics.

But what is the correct view of politics according to the realists?

First of all, political realists thought that humans were governed as much by passion as by reason. As such, human motivations were seen to be complex and protean: people had an incomplete cognitive capacity and a limited knowledge of the world around them;¹¹ beliefs and opinions played as large a part in their political behavior as any certain knowledge about the world.¹² Some realists even thought that people were morally imperfect as well.¹³ As a result, in the real world of politics people faced incessantly changing, incalculable situations; the attributes needed to act successfully were not wisdom or aptitude for learning, but the ability to give the proper responses to special and most often unforeseen challenges. This is what Machiavelli called *virtù*, Guicciardini called *discrezione*, Max Weber called *Augenmass*, and Morgenthau called *statesmanship*. Unfortunately, political virtues and moral virtues (a distinction made by Mark Philp in his *Political Conduct*)¹⁴ were not the same, and sometimes they might have even clashed with each other. Needless to say, at least according to realists political necessity had primacy over morality in any case of conflict between the two.

Realists thought that societies were torn by conflicts, and that more often than not these conflicts could not be solved by rational discussion or a fair negotiation of interests. Politics was needed because conflicts would have ruined societies without an arbiter with the necessary means to enforce its decisions. This was exactly how Weber, in his famous lecture "On Politics as a Vocation," defined the state: "a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."¹⁵

¹¹ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 84–87.

¹² David Hume, *Political Essays*, ed. Knud Haakonssen, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 16.

¹³ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 60.

¹⁴ Mark Philp, *Political Conduct* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 4.

¹⁵ Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. David S. Owen and Tracy B. Strong, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub., 2004), 33.

Power—a concept that became a trademark of political realism—prevailed in the realist descriptions of politics because cooperation is never to be taken for granted. Usually we do not have to use physical force to obtain our goals, but we always need a means to make people do what we want. Modern democracies work by power as much as medieval monarchies or ancient republics did. In a fictive dialogue between Socrates and his former student, the demagogue Alcibiades, Bertrand de Jouvenel wittily pointed out that wisdom without the ability to move people was as dangerous to the future of democracy as immoral but effective demagoguery.¹⁶ Joseph Schumpeter, an early advocate of an elitist understanding of modern democracy, argued in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* that it was the main task of professional politicians to use their powers to create a “manufactured will” of the people, because people by themselves do not have a commonly shared will.¹⁷

In some sense, therefore, power was an end in itself for political realists. As Hobbes wrote in his *Leviathan*, people had a “perpetuall [*sic*] and restless desire of Power after power” because they needed power not only for obtaining more pleasure, but also for ensuring that which they already had.¹⁸ And Hobbes was not the only one who assumed that power hunger was an inherent part of human nature. Thucydides’ Athenians argued in his *Peloponnesian War* that

we believe it of the gods, and we know it for sure of men, that under some permanent compulsion of nature wherever they can rule, they will. We did not make this law; it was already laid down, and we are not the first to follow it; we inherited it as a fact, and we shall pass it on as a fact to remain true for ever; and we follow it in the knowledge that you and anyone else given the same power as us would do the same. So as for divine favor, we can see no reason to fear disadvantage.¹⁹

About twenty-five centuries later Hans Morgenthau said practically the same thing but in less dramatic language.²⁰

¹⁶ Jouvenel, *The Pure Theory of Politics*, 17–28.

¹⁷ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 263.

¹⁸ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 61.

¹⁹ Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 304.

²⁰ Alfons Söllner, “German Conservatism in America: Morgenthau’s Political Realism,” *Telos*, no. 72 (1987): 167.

We should not be surprised, therefore, that realists do not like any vision of politics that depicts a harmonic world of peacefully cooperating people, seeks rational solutions to every political problem, and stresses the primacy of morality over politics. Utopias seem to be guilty in all these charges, and thus they are favorite targets of realist criticism. But what about a utopia that follows the realist vision of politics point by point? Would it be acquitted by the court of political realism? The answer to this question mostly depends on how realism adjudicates in the use of fiction to discuss the reality of politics.

Realism in Fiction

Conspiracies, murders, rapes, wars, and treachery are common to the pages of Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*. It is easy for the reader to get the sense of a cruel and unfair world in which young girls have to learn that romances are not true, knights may turn out to be scoundrels, honest men may be betrayed by rogues, and wars can be won by bribes. There are also many appropriate metaphors and fables through which characters express their realist understanding of politics. But the key to understanding how deeply the world of this novel series is rooted in the political vision of realism is the political geography of Essos and Westeros and the chain of events presented in the books that leads to the falls of the three greatest feudal dynasties of Westeros: House Baratheon, House Stark, and House Lannister.

The political geographies of the two continents reflect the inherent instability of the political orders of Essos and Westeros. Essos is the home of a number of smaller city republics that permanently compete with each other in a somewhat anarchic manner. The apparent fluidity in political relations on the continent is rooted in a catastrophic event in the past of Essos: the mystic Doom that put a tragic end to the Valyrian Empire left Essos with a chaotic whirl of rival successor states. The ongoing wars ruined most of the continent and turned it into a desert, but also created a fragile balance of power between the city-states. As the books begin, the wars remain, but now are fought by smaller mercenary companies. The present-day wars are not meant to be game-changing events. On the contrary, they seem to belong to the "rule of the game." This is why the emergence of the Targaryen pretender, Daenerys Stormborn, causes such turmoil: she does not seem to accept the historical status quo and stubbornly strives to change everything she encounters. She liberates slaves, destroys old cities,

and makes unusual alliances—political moves that do not seem to make any sense to any experienced political observer. It is not surprising that she soon becomes an idol and a legendary heroine, the Dragon Queen to some people (for example, the believers of the Red God in Volantis), and a common enemy of the political establishments in the cities.

The other continent, Westeros, is ruled by a composite monarchy of seven kingdoms that were subjugated by the Targaryen conqueror just three centuries before the beginning of *A Song of Ice and Fire*. The kingdom was won through sheer force (for example, in cases of the burning of Harrenhal and the battle of Field of Fire), a combination of force and compromise (as in the case of Dorne), or mere threats (as was the case with the King of the North, who bent his knee to King Aegon the Conqueror). The new political order put an end to the legitimacy of thousand-year-old monarchies and incorporated the seven independent lands into one kingdom under the rule of the Iron Throne of the Targaryens.

Although the historical references of the novel series show an eventful history even before the arrival of the Targaryens, it is obvious that the new kingdom was originally built as much on force as on the opinions and true feelings of their subjects. This is a distinction that should remind us of David Hume's claim in his famous essay, *Of the First Principles of Government*, that both the most tyrannical and most free governments are founded equally on opinion, not on brute force: "The soldan of EGYPT, or the emperor of ROME, might drive his harmless subjects, like brute beasts, against their sentiments and inclination: But he must, at least, have led his *mamelukes*, or *prætorian bands*, like men, by their opinion."²¹ Naturally, it took considerable amount of time to accustom the kingdom's subjects to the new political order.

This Humean observation is tellingly illustrated by the story of the Targaryen conquest of Westeros. Although the dragons of the House Targaryen provided the newcomers with the military superiority necessary to subjugate all seven independent lands, the Targaryens still had to make many concessions to the old dynasties and local elites in order to secure their power. Some of the old dynasties turned into feudal lords or "wardens" (practically suzerains) of large parts of the new kingdom, and where old dynasties were wiped out by the War of Conquest, new great houses were created to fill the gaps. The new kingdom thus retained the local customs and traditions of the old kingdoms, and as the plot of the

²¹ Hume, *Political Essays*, 16.

novel series demonstrates, it is not very difficult even in the present to gain political support by appealing to the separatist sentiments of the people of the North or the Iron Islands.

The Targaryens were true “new princes” in the Machiavellian sense. Their rule lacked legitimacy apart from their dragons, and this fact made their fate dependent on their political *virtù*. A number of political metaphors and historical references made throughout the volumes express this state of inherent instability. For example, the Iron Throne—the seat of the Targaryen kings—was forged of the swords of the defeated kings (a clear reference to the final basis of the new regime), and as is repeatedly mentioned in the books, is a seat that is not very comfortable to sit in (an unequivocal reference to the difficulties of maintaining their rule). Another apt symbol of the nature of the Targaryen regime is the fate of the Targaryen dragons, the source of the conquerors’ military power: the subsequent generations of the dragons become smaller and smaller in size and eventually die out. The meaning of this symbolic story does not require too much explanation. As time went on, sheer force played less and less of a role in holding the seven kingdoms together (the other side of the coin was that the Targaryens lost their power in the end). Realists would be happy to hear this; Machiavelli, for example, said that “through the great length and continuity of his dominion the memories and causes of innovations die out, because one change always leaves indentations for the construction of another.”²²

A third telling expression of the inherent instability of the Targaryen regime is its family history. In the succeeding generations of the dynasty brilliant leaders and madmen alternate repeatedly. It is also a mad king—actually *the* Mad King—who causes the final collapse of the Targaryen regime. As Ser Barristan puts it: “I am no maester to quote history at you, Your Grace. Swords have been my life, not books. But every child knows that the Targaryens have always danced too close to madness. Your father was not the first. King Jaehaerys once told me that madness and greatness are two sides of the same coin. Every time a new Targaryen is born, he said, the gods toss the coin in the air and the world holds its breath to see how it will land.”²³

²² Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 8.

²³ George R. R. Martin, *A Storm of Swords*, bk. 3 of *A Song of Ice and Fire* (New York: Bantam Books, 2000), chap. 71.

This entire backstory happened well before the novel series begins, but it still has a great impact on the political relations of Westeros. The major characters of the first volumes of the series, such as King Robert, Lord Eddard Stark, Lord Varys, Lord Baelish, Lord Stannis, and Lord Tywin, all started their careers during the last years of the Targaryen regime and contributed in some way to its collapse. When King Robert of House Baratheon and Ned Stark of House Stark brought down the Targaryens together, a new dynasty was established and a new political order was created.

The inherent instability of this new regime descends precisely from the decisions made two decades earlier. The memory of Targaryen loyalty is still there—and there are two surviving Targaryen heirs living in exile in Essos. Since the beginning of the civil war that brought down House Targaryen, King Robert vainly has tried to reconcile former enemies: the great Houses of the Lannisters, who were loyalists until the end but played a crucial and inglorious role in the dethroning of the Targaryens, and the Starks, the first rebels against the Targaryens. What is worse, King Robert is not an ideal “new prince”; although a brave warrior, King Robert has proven to be a poor king. He has not liked to govern and left everything to his council, but at the same time demanded too much money for his manly pleasures (hunting, tournaments, trysts, etc.), causing a permanent, if concealed, crisis in the royal finances. The survival of the new regime has been mostly due to his old allies: Lord Jon Arryn, the real head of the Baratheon administration; Stannis Baratheon, Robert’s younger brother and a good soldier of the king; and Eddard (Ned) Stark, the Warden of the North and a great military leader.

The strongest pillar of the new regime is a strange balance of power—for almost two decades there was no surviving adult member of House Targaryen. In addition, King Robert achieved a basic level of legitimacy because his family is distantly connected to the Targaryens, and he also made his peace with most of the loyalist families and left the burden of governing the kingdom to the great houses. House Lannister retained its gold and its influence through a marriage between King Robert and Queen Cersei, the daughter of Lord Tywin. Ned Stark returned to his distant home in the North, but is always ready to provide military support to the new regime. Yet at the same time, this balance of power is the reason for the inherent instability of the new political order because it left a great deal of conflicts postponed, rather than solved.

The first volume of the series is a narrative of the collapse of the post-Targaryen status quo. It begins with the sudden death of Lord Arryn,

the “Hand of the King,” an important actor in the new regime, and continues with Lord Eddard (Ned) Stark, the new Hand, getting entangled in the complicated conspiracies of the capital. After being deceived by a plot hatched by one of the major schemer characters of the series, Lord Baelish, he starts a civil war against his old enemies, House Lannister. He also discovers the new royal family’s terrible secret: King Robert is not the true father of his supposed offspring and heir. However, Lord Stark lacks the necessary political acuteness to outwit his enemies, and this deficiency leads to the untimely death of the king and also causes his own fall. The capture of Ned Stark provokes his eldest son, Robb, to raise an army in the North and march southward, in order to save his father, and defeat the Lannisters.

At this point—somewhere near the end of the first novel—the fragile balance of power of the Baratheon regime is over forever, and the sequel novels tell the stories of a series of hitherto unsuccessful attempts to restore the political order of Westeros in one way or other. At the peak of the civil war, there are no less than five kings in Westeros and even others outside the mainland. Here the story becomes as Machiavellian as ever. This is precisely what makes the narrative so thrilling for readers and so interesting for the theorist: neither our expectations of the story’s trajectory nor our personal affections toward the major characters are satisfied by the turns and shifts of the plot. All the attempts to reestablish political order fail, and the more we would like to see a character succeed the more he or she is likely to fail. The novels play with the expectations and emotions of the reader, but their game is also a powerful demonstration of the realist vision of the dirty world of politics: politics is not about what would be the best, but what can be achieved.

For example, the idealism of the Targaryen pretender, Princess Daenerys, proves to be a major hurdle to her efforts to become queen of Westeros. Similarly, not even the bravery, gallantry, or undeniable military skill of the young Robb Stark, the “King in the North,” can prevent his final failure. His cause was weakened by the parochialism of his Northern supporters, but his fate is finally decided when he puts his personal honor (marrying a girl whom he bedded) above political necessity (breaking a promise to marry the daughter of a powerful, but dangerous ally). His tragic death, in the famous Red Wedding, is one of the most clearly Machiavellian moments of the whole series. Robb’s former allies betray him and massacre his entire entourage in response to Robb’s fatal political mistake. But, ironically, the traitors also commit an equally disastrous political miscalculation in openly violating the divine laws of hospitality, thereby laying

themselves open to rightful hatred and revenge. What Robb's traitors seem to forget is what Machiavelli asserted so eloquently in *The Prince*: "It is not necessary for a prince to possess all of the above-mentioned qualities, but it is very necessary for him to appear to possess them."²⁴

Both Daenerys and Robb exemplify the primacy of politics over morality in the world of the novels, but perhaps the books' virtues can best be judged through the complex and balanced characterization of Lord Tywin. His fate is a perfect example of this complexity: although Tywin is undoubtedly one of the most talented politicians of Westeros, he nonetheless dies incidentally in a grotesque family quarrel that is, in turn, deeply political in nature. The Lannisters are depicted in the series in a very unfavorable manner, and Lord Tywin does not do much to earn our sympathy. Yet however unlovely, ruthless, or unscrupulous he may seem to be, it is still he who does the most to keep conflicts at bay and to work out viable compromises. Although he does not show much reluctance when he has to end the war with King Robb, the infamous Red Wedding is the exception—not the rule—in his politics. It is not he who begins the civil war—both he and Ned Stark fall prey to the scheme of Lord Baelish, an ambitious and low-born counselor of the king. It is not he, but his children and grandchildren who make moves against the Starks, and it is not he, but the Starks who make the first step in the conflict. He certainly tries to defend himself and his family honor, but for a long time he pursues a strategy of deterring the Starks from starting a full-scale war against him. When Ned Stark is captured, Tywin intends to spare the life of his archenemy and exile him to the Wall, but his grandchild, the cruel King Joffrey, prevents the peaceful compromise by ordering to behead the traitor. Later, Lord Tywin makes a compromise with King Robb's internal enemies and creates a new political order in the North, makes peace with King Renly's former allies after the early death of the young usurper, defeats the army of King Stannis, and tries to counterbalance King Joffrey's madness. His death, ironically, is a tragic accident, at least from a political viewpoint. Lord Tywin fails to realize that his single most effective ally could be his youngest son, Tyrion, and misses the opportunity to support Tyrion against the much less competent and far more envious members of the family, Queen Cersei and King Joffrey. Tyrion's revenge—the murder of his own father—comes from personal hatred, but it is the result of a political miscalculation: Lord Tywin was unable to judge correctly whom to

²⁴ Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 61.

trust and whom to fear. Tywin's fortune and fate are both that of a true statesman in a Machiavellian world. However talented a politician may be, his or her survival can never be taken for granted.

All the other players of the "Game of Thrones" also must face the incalculability of the world of politics. Lord Varys, one of the most interesting scheming characters of the series, seems to have a secret agenda of restoring the Targaryen dynasty. However, his first choice, Prince Viserys, proves to be a madman and a coward, and the next pretender, Princess Daenerys, gets tangled up by the complicated political situation in Essos and by her own idealism. Later it is revealed that Lord Varys has a third iron in the fire and that there is a third living Targaryen. Lord Varys does much to destabilize the Baratheon regime in its last days and does even more to prevent Lord Tywin from creating a new balance of power, but he does not seem to have much fortune with his favorites, the Targaryens.

Similarly, the secret Targaryen loyalism of the Princes of Dorne is as much a personal as a political issue, because Prince Rhaegar's brutally murdered wife was a Princess of Dorne, and her death was ordered by Lord Tywin himself. The Princes of Dorne make up complicated plans to strengthen their alliance with the exiled Targaryens through marriages, but they also plan to play a Baratheon girl, their own sister, against King Joffrey and then his successor, King Tommen. However, circumstances do not seem to favor the Dornian cause or their Machiavellian scheming. The young Prince Quentin of Dorne dies when boldly trying to impress his bride-to-be, Princess Daenerys, and a third Targaryen (a groom-to-be of a Princess of Dorne, at least in the Dornian plans) begins his invasion of Westeros without consulting anyone and without any knowledge about the Dornians' plans concerning him.

The only character who seems to ceaselessly arise is Lord Baelish, who initiated all these events with a murder that had no clear purpose. He appears in the first volume as an important counselor of King Robert who does not have extensive personal estates. At the end of the fifth volume, he is Lord of Harrenhal, Lord Paramount of the Trident, and also the guardian of the underage Lord Robert Arryn, thus controlling two of the largest feudal lands of the kingdom. Even at this point, we still do not know his real intentions, but there are good reasons to think that his real agenda is of personal nature. A son of a petty lord, always humiliated by greater lords, having great talents but not being supported by wealth, Lord Baelish seems to follow only his own interests—and his only goal is to establish himself among the greatest lords. If this analysis is true, then he

is almost the perfect “new prince,” because at the start he had nothing else but his political *virtú*.

We also still do not know how the story of the civil war will end because the series is not yet finished. Since *A Song of Ice and Fire* is a fantasy series that includes magic and dragons, it is quite possible that supernatural powers might intervene at some point, and some kind of transcendent reformation of the order of the world will come about. The devastated state of Westeros, the fatal loss of a balance of power in the political systems of the two continents, as well as the dark forces gathering around the peripheries of the civilized world suggest that something of this kind might happen in the end.

However, we can confidently assert that, up to this point, the political world of Westeros and Essos is entirely realistic in terms of political realism. Both continents have inherently instable political orders with a fragile balance of power at the beginning of the novel series; the balance is lost due to the chain of events narrated in the novels; and, as time goes on, there remains less and less hope to restore the *status quo ante*.

This also means that it would be surprising if we could foresee the end of the story. If there is a solution to the crisis of this world, then it is still to be written by an innovative political actor, a “new prince” with the necessary political *virtú*. Will it be Daenerys or Jon Snow? King Stannis? King Tommen? Lord Baelish? Lady Sansa? Or someone else? We cannot say for sure—at least, if our analysis holds true.

The Illusion of Realism

Some might insist that, the deep-rooted political realism of the plot of *A Song of Ice and Fire* notwithstanding, a fantasy novel still has nothing to say about realist political theory—it is just a skillfully narrated dystopian tale without any relevance to the real world. Perhaps some people may find its realist-minded commonplaces or some of the fables and riddles of the novels revealing—these skeptics might say—and these people may get a better picture about the ruthlessness of the world of politics, but there is nothing in this novel series that we cannot find expressed more astutely elsewhere.

It is not my ambition to deny this assertion. On the contrary, I would like to appeal exactly to this sort of stance on the novel series in order to get to the point of my argument. I am convinced that the single most important lesson we can draw from *A Song of Ice and Fire* is something

that is ubiquitous in the realist tradition, but rarely becomes so apparent as in this series. But to realize this, we should turn our attention away from the plot of the novels and to their narrative structure.

The story of *A Song of Ice and Fire* is narrated from the ever-changing perspectives of a set of *point of view characters* (a term used by the writer himself to denote those characters whose viewpoint influences the narrative of a certain chapter in his novels) that makes it possible for the author to share with the reader as little information about the trajectory of the plot as possible. It also makes it possible for him to share misinformation and to suggest conclusions about main characters that are distorted by the cognitive biases, passions, and perceived interests of the point of view characters. The narration is conducted in free indirect speech where there is always an interference between the levels of narration and action, the personal and the impersonal language situations. This leaves the reader in uncertainty about the reliability of information of the events narrated.²⁵ As a result, the readers can never be sure what is true, what is falsely perceived by the point of view characters, and what is told by them strategically. The reader has to go through a long political odyssey without any constant point of reference or any certain standard to judge what is true and what is not.

Let us imagine for a moment that we are not speaking about a fantasy world, but the eventful career of Kevin White, the legendary mayor of Boston from 1968 to 1984, or perhaps the outbreak of World War I. Tilo Schabert's *Boston Politics*, based on close observation and interviews with Kevin White's staff, describes White's democratic urban politics as a form of autocracy and uses Machiavellian analogies to make his point more clear.²⁶ In his description, White's politics are ever changing, secretive, and highly manipulative. According to Schabert, politics is a creative activity that is more similar to the arts than to science or engineering, especially because it does not have any purpose beyond itself. White did his job in Boston expressly to remain in office, and he did everything in his power to maintain his rule. On the other hand, Henry Kissinger tells us a story in which World War I is a just tragic accident, a consequence of the mutual misunderstandings between the outdated protocols of nineteenth-century diplomacy and the unforeseeable novelties of twentieth-century military

²⁵ Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 43–75.

²⁶ Tilo Schabert, *Boston Politics: The Creativity of Power*, De Gruyter Studies on North America 4 (New York: W. de Gruyter, 1989), 9–44.

organization.²⁷ Kissinger provides a detailed account of how unprepared European politicians were for the real gravity of their decisions and how impotent they proved to be in the face of the domino effect generated by their fatal diplomatic moves. Kissinger's account is a variation on the old realist theme of the balance of powers. The Germans felt themselves to be threatened by traditional weaknesses and their intermediary position between France and Russia, and responded with a military doctrine aimed at making themselves capable of fighting against both of their enemies with the hope of success. Once the Germans made this fatal decision, the nineteenth-century-style European "concert of powers" was destroyed for good.

What makes Schabert's and Kissinger's accounts so interesting for us is not that both narratives could easily be compared to certain fictive events of Westeros, but rather that both accounts would like to hide things from our eyes. However confident these nonfiction accounts seem to be, no one can actually be sure of their veracity. No one can actually know for sure how reliably Schabert was informed of Kevin White's "invisible court" and how much of his account is owed to the Machiavellian analogy he used to understand the deep structure of Boston's urban politics. Similarly, Kissinger's narrative is so persuasive only because it appeals to the well-known concepts of the balance of power and human imperfection, and he uses these cleverly to shed light on a chain of events for which there are actually a lot of other similarly persuasive interpretations. Both accounts appeal to our readiness to accept that politicians are power-hungry and not the cleverest people of all. They also rely on our wish to accept accounts of politics that profess to look "behind the curtain."

These accounts offer us a kind of "illusion of realism," a close familiarity with the political machinery. They do the same as the dystopian fantasy novel; they tell a story written in a realist manner and require us to suspend our disbelief when reading the story. Schabert and Kissinger, of course, framed narratives about historical events and historical characters, collected a number of facts and tried to stick to factual reality as much as they could. It is not my aim to suggest that there is no essential difference between telling a tale and narrating history, nor to assert what Hayden White has said about the "expungable relativity" of emplotment.²⁸ However, we have to take into account that political realism is present not

²⁷ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 137–217.

²⁸ Hayden White, "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 37.

only in the exceptional cases when sincere scientists of politics say something reliable about Kevin White, or when skillful fantasy writers set up a completely fictional narrative. The “illusion of realism” also works when we are discussing politics in a pub, when a political journalist comments on a current political event, or when two politicians try to persuade each other on a certain view. In all of these cases, the appeal to the reliability of the narrator, or his proximity to the somewhat mythical places where things actually happen, is still required in the same way as it is required when we are reading a scholarly account or a fantasy novel.

There is a worrying magnetism to the “illusion of realism” that equally excites our mind whether we read the story of the War of Five Kings of Westeros, the successful autocrat of Boston, the beginnings of World War I, or the news of the day. This magnetism was reflected in the acclaiming critical response to Martin’s novel series and subsequent HBO television series based on the books. In truth, the same thing happened in the case of *House of Cards*, that follows the rise of an ambitious, win-at-all-costs American politician. The worrying aspect of this illusion is quite obvious: it works with no respect to the truthfulness of the story told to us. This is an epistemological caveat that we can and *should* safely learn from a dystopian fantasy novel. It would be much wiser to learn from this source than from where our future, in reality, is at stake.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bal, Mieke. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 2nd ed. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- Diamond, Larry Jay, and Marc F. Plattner, eds. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy Revisited*. A Journal of Democracy Book. Baltimore, Md: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Galston, William A. “Realism in Political Theory.” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9, no. 4 (2010): 385–411.
- Hobbes, Thomas, and J. C. A. Gaskin. *Leviathan*. Oxford World’s Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Hume, David, and Knud Haakonssen. *Political Essays*. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Iggers, Georg G. *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, n.d.
- Jacoby, Henry. *Game of Thrones and Philosophy: Logic Cuts Deeper Than Swords*. Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture Series. Hoboken, NJ.: Wiley & Sons., 2012.

- Jouvenel, Bertrand de. *The Pure Theory of Politics*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000.
- Kant, Immanuel. "Toward Perpetual Peace." In *Practical Philosophy*, edited by Mary J Gregor, 311–52. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Kissinger, Henry. *Diplomacy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Translated and edited by Peter Bondanella with an introduction by Maurizio Viroli. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, n.d.
- Martin, George R. R. *A Clash of Kings*. A Song of Ice and Fire, book 2. New York: Bantam Books, 1999.
- . *A Dance with Dragons*. A Song of Ice and Fire, book 5. New York: Bantam Books Trade Paperbacks, 2012.
- . *A Feast for Crows*. A Song of Ice and Fire, book 4. New York: Bantam Books Trade Paperbacks, 2014.
- . *A Game of Thrones*. A Song of Ice and Fire, book 1. New York: Bantam Books, 1996.
- . *A Storm of Swords*. A Song of Ice and Fire, book 3. New York: Bantam Books, 2000.
- Morgenthau, Hans J. *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*. London: Latimer House, 1947.
- Philp, Mark. *Political Conduct*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Schabert, Tilo. *Boston Politics: The Creativity of Power*. De Gruyter Studies on North America 4. Berlin; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1989.
- Schumpeter, Joseph. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942.
- Skinner, Quentin. *Visions of Politics*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Söllner, Alfons. "German Conservatism in America: Morgenthau's Political Realism." *Telos*, no. 72 (1987): 161–72.
- Thucydides. *The Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Martin Hammond, with an introduction and notes by P. J. Rhodes. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Weber, Max. *On the Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Edited and translated by E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949.
- . *The Vocation Lectures*. Edited and with an introduction by David S. Owen and Tracy B. Strong. Translation by Rodney Livingstone. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 2004.
- White, Hayden. "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth." In *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, edited by Saul Friedlander, 37–53. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Williams, Bernard. "Realism and Moralism in Political Theory." In *In the Beginning Was the Deed*, edited by Geoffrey Hawthorn, 1–17. Princeton, 2007.

AFTERWORD

ZSOLT CZIGÁNYIK

The present volume offers interdisciplinary analyses of utopian phenomena. The interdisciplinary nature of studies in utopianism (and also in other fields) is becoming more and more accepted, yet the cooperation of the various disciplines in interpretation is not automatic, and their emphases and approaches may differ substantially. As Balázs Trencsényi argues, “historians of political thought try to renegotiate the relationship between history, literary studies and the social sciences, pointing out that the understanding of a political interaction might necessitate the use of a variety of different interpretative techniques and approaches.”¹ Yet interdisciplinarity is not only a technical issue. Ernest Gellner (who was a professor at the Central European University) wrote that there is “what one might call the individualistic/atomistic conception of knowledge. Knowledge, on this view, is something practiced or achieved above all by individuals alone: if more than one person is involved, and collaboration takes place, this does not really modify the essence of the activity or of the achievement.”² Later, however, he proposed a more organic vision: “Knowledge is essentially a team game. Anyone who observes, investigates or interprets the world, inevitably deploys concepts which are carried by an entire cultural/linguistic community.”³ The interdisciplinary endeavor

¹ Balázs Trencsényi et al., eds., *Negotiating Modernity in the ‘Long Nineteenth Century’*, vol. 1 of *A History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 5.

² Ernest Gellner, *Language and Solitude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 6.

of this volume subscribes to the organic view of knowledge, and the cooperation of the various disciplines implies that utopia is not nowhere, but it is a method and an opportunity to gain knowledge and to contemplate on the past and future, as well as the present, of human fears and hopes.

The present volume primarily negotiates the roles and positions of literary studies, the history of ideas, and political science, and does so in the contested field of utopianism, where apology has become standard due to the rejection of utopian ideas in the social sciences for most of the twentieth century. An important reason for the marginalization of utopias in modern social theory is that Marxism is known for its explicit opposition to the concept of utopia, especially in the form of utopian socialism.⁴ Whereas Engels allowed certain positive roles to the early utopians (Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen) in his influential pamphlet “Socialism: Utopian and Scientific,” he also maintained that “they could not avoid drifting off into pure phantasies.”⁵ Marx and Engels, while explicitly criticizing utopianism, developed their own theories for the restructuring of society (an obviously utopian project), thus becoming “anti-utopian utopianists” to use Stephen Lukes’s term.⁶ This anti-utopianism had a lasting and widespread effect, but even Marxists did not thoroughly reject utopia. Ernst Bloch (1885–1977) looked at utopianism in the broadest sense in *The Principle of Hope* (written between 1938 and 1947); here, the individual is motivated by “dreams of a better life.” Hope becomes the fuel of human existence and Bloch systematically examines the presence of hope in many spheres of life. Phenomena like myths, fairy tales, and many elements of popular culture reflect what we may call the anthropological aspect of utopianism. As Wayne Hudson put it, Bloch offered an unprecedented survey of human wishes, and his work naturalized utopia. Bloch looked at utopia as natural to human beings, a part of human nature that is diffused in human culture.⁷

⁴ The influence of Marxism on literature is investigated through a case study of Modern Irish Drama by Eglantina Rempert in her contribution to this volume.

⁵ Friedrich Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, trans. Edward Aveling (New York: Cosimo, 2008), 36.

⁶ Quoted by Roger Paden, “Marx’s Critique of the Utopian Socialists,” *Utopian Studies* 13, no. 2 (2002): 67.

⁷ Wayne Hudson, *The Marxist Philosophy of Ernst Bloch* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1982), 107. Ruth Levitas also highlights a broad sense of utopia claiming that the “core of utopia is the desire for being otherwise.” Ruth Levitas, *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution Society* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), xi. This corresponds with Ronen’s notion of the widespread role of fictionality in human culture as discussed in the introduction.

As Sargent argues, “the most complete success of the anti-utopians was to make the label ‘Utopian’ take on the meaning of fanciful, unrealistic, impractical.”⁸ For much of the twentieth century this meaning overshadowed the potential in utopianism to form a vision of a future society in social sciences, and hindered the existence of negotiable, viable alternatives. This negative attitude went so far that proponents of essentially utopian ideas avoided the term “utopia.” As Luisa Passerini argues, the protagonists of 1968 who used the utopian slogan, “Being a realist means demanding the impossible,” did not like to use the term “utopia,” because it acquired a negative sense and was mostly used to express impossibility and absurdity.⁹ Passerini also claims that this interpretation is not necessary, drawing our attention to the difference in Italian between *utopico*, a term with positive connotations, and *utopistico*, an adjective burdened with the meaning of absurdity and impossibility. This duality is also present in Karl Mannheim’s analysis, and yet the literary analyses of this volume (especially the chapter “Negative Utopia in Central Europe: *Kazohinia* and the Dystopian Political Climate of the 1930s”) reveal that absurdity may also have a function in offering an ironic criticism of the present situation, thus discrediting false possibilities. What appears ridiculous or absurd in fiction will prove to be faulty or even catastrophic outside literature as well.

Another reason why utopia became suspicious in the second half of the twentieth century is that it was perceived to be superseded by ideology.¹⁰ This is primarily due to the overarching influence of Karl Mannheim, the Hungarian-born sociologist who published *Ideology and Utopia* in 1929 in Germany. Without repeating the statements of the first chapter of this volume, we can reiterate that Mannheim is critical of the spirit of utopia, and essentially sees it as a phenomenon of a dual nature—either as an unreal, escapist portrayal of the future, or as a possibility for the future.¹¹ Despite the dangers of escapism lying within utopia, “the complete disappearance of the utopian element from human thought . . . would bring about a static state of affairs.”¹² It follows from this that the basic message of utopianism (in any form) is that things can be different:

⁸ Lyman Tower Sargent, “The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited,” *Utopian Studies* 5 (1994): 22.

⁹ Luisa Passerini, “‘Utopia’ and Desire,” *Thesis Eleven* 68 (February 2002): 15.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹ Cf. Karl Mannheim, *Sociology as Political Education*, ed. David Kettler and Colin Loader (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001), 22.

¹² Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1991), 236.

any particular social or political configuration is contingent. Utopianism highlights the possibility of change and relativizes any existing power structure—including itself, the particular alternative or fictive political structure it depicts or proposes. Dynamism and a rejection of finite structures is an implicit aspect of any utopian phenomenon.

For Mannheim there is a contrastive, dynamic relationship between ideology and utopia. The representatives of a given ideology apply the negative label “utopian” to all ideas that *from their point of view* are never to be realized. However, if utopia is realized it becomes ideology; thus, the utopia of yesterday may be the ideology of tomorrow. “Today ideology and utopia are best seen as intimately connected in that there is a utopia at the heart of every ideology because all ideologies have some notion of the better world that will come about if the ideology is fully implemented.”¹³ The later modern consensus that there are three key aspects of utopianism—literary, practical, and theoretical—was not yet known to Mannheim, and he focused on the theoretical aspect of utopianism. Utopia for him is not a literary term, but essentially a way of political thinking. Conversely, whatever is claimed of the political theoretical aspect of utopianism cannot automatically be applied to works of literature, even when their relation seems apparent. The investigation of the delicate relationship of the three aspects of utopianism is an ongoing process, of which the present volume is a part. The chapters of this volume investigate how the literary and artistic in utopianism, that is utopias and dystopias (whether on page or screen), are related to the political theoretical aspect of utopianism, particularly in the formation of political ideology. The relationship of literature and politics is generally an unsolved problem. That works of imaginative literature can be used as illustrations in the understanding of social or political concepts and processes can only be a starting point in the context of “the ‘rehumanisation’ of the social sciences in recent decades.”¹⁴ It should be pointed out that the formation of political ideology, both in its essence and formulation, is influenced by concepts, symbols, and metaphors that appear in literary works, and that literature may become “an essential source of political understanding rather than mere illustration.”¹⁵

¹³ Lyman Tower Sargent, “Ideology and Utopia,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, ed. Michael Freeden et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 447.

¹⁴ Maureen Whitebrook, “Politics and Literature?,” *Politics* 15, no. 1 (1995): 55.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 57–58.

The relevance of the investigation of the literary, and with increasing significance cinematic representations of political notions, can be underlined by the work of another significant thinker dealt with in the first chapter. Paul Ricoeur sees ideology as a discourse that justifies the identity of a group. Yet the reaffirmation of one's identity takes place not only through concepts, but most effectively through symbols and narratives. However, the process of reaffirmation that is so important for the coherence of a society may be perverted by the ruling elite that seeks to justify its own power. A discourse of utopia (distinctly symbolic and of a narrative nature) serves to control this distortion by introducing a sense of doubt toward existing orders and offering alternative options to a society.¹⁶

Another benefit of investigating literature in the social sciences, to Whitebrook, is that "literature disturbs a dependence on reason and rationality, it expands the concept of 'reality'; it enlarges the vocabulary of politics." Furthermore, literature "provides the occasion for . . . the *imaginative* contemplation of political possibilities . . . [and] allows a sense of perspective . . . [for] the significance of the individual in politics."¹⁷ Utopia naturally emphasizes structural elements in politics, depicting societies as impersonal socioeconomical structures in which the individual often appears only as a cogwheel in a machine. Yet in a literary narrative, agency necessarily appears in the form of actions of characters, thus the literary text inevitably highlights the individual and particular, while simultaneously presenting the universal or the larger structure. If the role of the individual is marginal, as in the classical literary utopian tradition (see, for instance, Thomas More's *Utopia*), the modern reader's attention to the of lack of individual action and agency reveals the absence of something important. In the dystopian mode, the individual's lack of agency and the suffocating effects of a totalitarian system usually form the basis of the narrative, highlighting the helplessness of the personal subject.

There seems to be a contradiction in the way that narratives of modern literary utopias and dystopias operate and how the social sci-

¹⁶ Cf. Paul Ricoeur, "The Creativity of Language," in Richard Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers: The Phenomenological Heritage* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1984). Similarly, "the critique of contemporary society expressed in the dystopia implies (or asserts) the need for change." See Peter Fitting, "Utopia, dystopia and science fiction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 141.

¹⁷ Whitebrook, "Politics and Literature?," 60.

ences present a utopian discourse. As Whitebrook argues, “The benefits of bringing literature into politics include literature’s attention to particularities.”¹⁸ Later, she argues that it is also literature that brings attention to the individual in politics. The logic of the narrative demands the existence of conflicts and characters, whereas social sciences present utopias that essentially deal with social-political structures, and less concerned with individual agency. From an aesthetic point of view, this underlying tension often results in a lack of well-developed characters, conflicts, and proper plots in utopian literature, especially in the early modern period. Theoretically, it is the ideal socioeconomic structure of the utopian state that is responsible for the ultimate happiness of mankind. But in both utopian and dystopian contexts it is often revealed that harmony can only be achieved and maintained through the individual virtues of the main heroes; it is a recurring element that the cunning of a protagonist defeats all opposing, negative powers (think of Katniss in *Hunger Games* or Jonas in *The Giver*).¹⁹ The fundamental role of the individual in a utopian discourse is in opposition with the structuralist view of history, most prominently expounded by György Lukács, who claimed that individual action constitutes only the surface of historical movements, beneath which more profound historical forces control events.²⁰ Imaginative literature stressing the necessity of individual agency in the narrative structure hence draws our attention to the polemics between the intentionalist and structuralist view of history and politics. Theda Skocpol recently argued that political processes such as social revolutions are “nonintentionalist at the macroscopic level . . . [as] there is no single acting group . . . that deliberately shapes the complex and multiply determined conflicts.”²¹ Opposing these views, the moderate intentionalist Eric Selbin argues that “the focus . . . needs to be on people, not structures, choices, not determinism,” and he calls for “the return of people and their ideas to a place of prominence in understanding and exploring” historical processes, as the exclusion of the

¹⁸ Whitebrook, 58.

¹⁹ Both examples refer to contemporary popular novels that were adapted to the screen. The *Hunger Games* trilogy was written by Suzanne Collins and adapted by Gary Ross from 2012 on; Lois Lowry’s *The Giver* (1993) was filmed in 2014, directed by Phillip Noyce.

²⁰ Cf. György Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971), 221.

²¹ Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 199.

individual from the analysis would assume a deterministic view of structural conditions.²² The analysis of literary works and especially utopias may help in this delicate question, as long as it is remembered that the literary element in utopian literature naturally emphasizes the personal agency of individuals against structural elements in history.

Dystopia

The investigation of twentieth-century and contemporary culture reveals that both the presence and the popularity of dystopias, and hence their relevance, is strongly growing. In contemporary culture this phenomenon is coupled with the increasing presence of post-apocalyptic narratives—books and movies that describe the destruction of human civilization and the re-emergence of human society afterward. Dystopian themes have become so popular that nowadays it is almost taken for granted that when a movie or a novel takes place in the future, its plot is defined by an undesirable social or political structure, even when these structures form only a formulaic and vague background to the plot. Dystopian settings are so popular that they appear in unexpected instances as well, such as in a recent film adaptation of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, where the aging aviator tells the story of his meeting with the little prince to a young girl in a dystopian suburb of a consumer society.²³ It may be claimed that presenting the utopian reality of “seeing rightly with one’s heart” makes the dystopian aspects of our civilization explicit. The widespread presence of dystopian notions and imagery in contemporary culture has important consequences. As Maziarczyk argues, “the term *dystopia* seems to have become nowadays an ‘umbrella’ term for any work depicting a gloomy vision of horrible society,”²⁴ and one may add that it has become an aesthetic, rather than an intellectual or political category in contemporary culture.²⁵ A number of chapters in the second part of

²² Eric Selbin “Revolution in the Real World: Bringing Agency Back” in *Theorizing Revolutions* ed. John Foran (London: Routledge, 1997), 123.

²³ *The Little Prince*, dir. Mark Osborne (2015).

²⁴ Grzegorz Maziarczyk, “Huxley/Orwell/Bradbury Reloaded; or, The Campy Art of Bricolage,” in *Imperfect Worlds and Dystopian Narratives in Contemporary Cinema*, ed. Artur Blaim and Ludmiła Gruszevska-Blaim (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 47.

²⁵ I owe thanks to Mate Nikola Tokić for drawing my attention to this change in focus.

this volume investigate this phenomenon, whose most important themes have already appeared in Yevgeny Zamyatins's *We* (1924), but these topics became confirmed in the dystopian tradition through George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. These semantic elements of the genre include mind control, the repression of emotions and imagination, the sublimation of individuality in a larger social unit, and the existence of a non-conformist revolt group, usually with an alienated protagonist whose sufferings highlight the impossibility of human existence within the framework of the total state. Thus, the focus of dystopia (whether on the page or on the screen) becomes the limits of humanity in the context of an extremely oppressive social construct that often claims to be beneficial, yet threatens individuality. The dystopian tension usually appears in the conflict between the individual and the larger social unit, yet in contemporary culture it is either a post-apocalyptic scenario that accompanies the compulsory dystopianism of the future plot, or the heroism of the protagonist that defeats the oppressive structural forces.

Although utopia and dystopia are often presented as being in a state of binary opposition, there is not necessarily a tension between them if we do not look at the two genres as being in contrastive relationship, but rather in a complementary one. As Gregory Claeys asserts, "the gap between utopia and dystopia is much narrower than a seemingly polar semantic juxtaposition indicates."²⁶ It may also be claimed that "Utopia has lost its ties with alluring visions of harmony and has turned into a threat,"²⁷ meaning that dystopia's prevalence may be a symptom of a general postmodern uncertainty and its incredulity toward grand narratives.²⁸ A utopia has to be certain of its values. Dystopia is probably the natural genre of less confident times. We are not really certain what is good, and even less certain how to achieve it, but, we know exactly what we do not want.

Such themes are explored in a rich and provocative way in the chapters of the present volume, and it is hoped that the readers find it as intellectually challenging as the authors have intended. Popular opinion links utopia to the future, often in an erroneous way believing that utopias

²⁶ Gregory Claeys, "News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia," *History* 98 (April 2013): 160.

²⁷ Russell Jacoby, *Picture Imperfect: Utopian Thought for an Anti-Utopian Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 81.

²⁸ Cf. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), xxiv.

necessarily describe future societies. We see utopia as being linked to the present in offering analysis and criticism of the problems of existing societies, and we assert that utopia may offer hope for the survival of humanity in times of the looming dangers of climate change, mass migration, and greater social tensions. A fuller understanding of utopia both in literary and political contexts may contribute to avoiding a dystopian future, and this volume—through its readers—may contribute not only to the celebration of the five-hundredth anniversary of Thomas More's *Utopia*, but also to maintaining the possibility of human civilization in the next five hundred years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Claeys, Gregory. "News from Somewhere: Enhanced Sociability and the Composite Definition of Utopia and Dystopia." *History* 98 (April 2013): 145–73.
- Engels, Friedrich. *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. Translated by Edward Aveling. New York: Cosimo, 2008.
- Fitting, Peter. "Utopia, dystopia and science fiction." In *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, edited by Gregory Claeys, 135–53. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Language and Solitude: Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Habsburg Dilemma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Hudson, Wayne. *The Marxist Philosophy of Ernst Bloch*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.
- Jacoby, Russell. *Picture Imperfect: Utopian Thought for an Anti-Utopian Age*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Levitas, Ruth. *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution Society*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013.
- Lukács, György. *History and Class Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Mannheim, Karl. *Ideology and Utopia*. London: Routledge, 1991.
- . *Sociology as Political Education*. Edited by David Kettler and Colin Loader. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001.
- Maziarczyk, Grzegorz. "Huxley/Orwell/Bradbury Reloaded; or, The Campy Art of Bricolage." In *Imperfect Worlds and Dystopian Narratives in Contemporary Cinema*, edited by Artur Blaim and Ludmiła Gruszevska-Blaim, 45–62. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011.
- Paden, Roger. "Marx's Critique of the Utopian Socialists." *Utopian Studies* 13, no. 2 (2002): 67–91.

- Passerini, Luisa. "‘Utopia’ and Desire." *Thesis Eleven* 68, no. 1 (February 2002): 11–30.
- Ricoeur, Paul. "The Creativity of Language." In *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers: The Phenomenological Heritage*, edited by Richard Kearney, 17–36. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. "Ideology and Utopia." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, edited by Michael Freeden et al., 439–51. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- . "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited." *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37.
- Selbin, Eric. "Revolution in the Real World: Bringing Agency Back." In *Theorizing Revolutions* edited by John Foran, 123–36. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Skocpol, Theda. *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- The Little Prince*. Directed by Mark Osborne. 2015.
- Trencsényi, Balázs, Maciej Janowski, Monika Baár, Maria Falina, and Michal Kopeček, eds. *Negotiating Modernity in the ‘Long Nineteenth Century’*. Vol. 1 of *A History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Whitebrook, Maureen. "Politics and Literature?" *Politics* 15, no. 1 (1995): 55–61.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Vera Benczik is senior lecturer at the Department of American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. She has published several studies about science fiction, popular culture, and the fiction of Margaret Atwood. Her current projects focus on the spatial rhetorics of apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic science fiction narratives, and the use of place and space in Margaret Atwood's dystopian fiction.

András Bozóki is professor of political science at Central European University in Budapest. His research interest focuses on political ideas, democratization, hybrid regimes, and the role of the intellectuals. His recent books include *Political Pluralism in Hungary* (2003), *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (with Miklós Sükösd, 2006), *Ars Politica* (2007), and *Virtual Republic* (2012).

Gregory Claeys is professor of history at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of eight books, most recently *Dystopia: A Natural History* (2016), and editor of some fifty volumes of primary sources and essays.

Zsolt Czigányik is senior lecturer at Eötvös Loránd University, and Humanities Initiative Fellow at Central European University, Budapest. He published a book on the role of human freedom in modern dystopias (*A szabadsághiány anatómiái*, 2011), and a number of essays in utopian and related subjects. He currently works on a monograph on Hungarian utopianism.

Ákos Farkas is the head of the Department of English Studies at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. His research is focused on twentieth-century English- and Hungarian-language fiction. His published work includes *Will's Son and Jake's Peer: Anthony Burgess's Joycean Negotiations* and a series of articles on James Joyce, the Huxleys, Vladimir Nabokov and such writers of Hungarian-language speculative fiction as Sándor Szathmári. As series editor, he has annotated and commented on Aldous Huxley's and Anthony Burgess's novels in Hungarian translation.

Dmitry Halavach is a doctoral candidate in Russian and Soviet history at Princeton University. His dissertation on the Polish-Soviet population transfers explores the experience of a European borderland with Soviet communism, Soviet nation-building, nationalism, and Nazi occupation.

Károly Pintér is associate professor at the Institute of English and American Studies, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest. His study entitled *Anatomy of Utopia: Narration, Estrangement and Ambiguity in More, Wells, Huxley and Clarke* was published in the US in 2010 and won the HUSSE Junior Book Award in the same year. His current research interest is church-state relations in the US and the phenomenon of American civil religion, on which he has published several essays. He also wrote undergraduate textbooks on British and American culture.

Eglantina Rempert is senior lecturer in Irish Literature at the School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. She has completed her PhD at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. She researches the literature and the politics of the Irish Literary Revival, and has published essays in *Ireland, West to East* (2014), *Ireland in/and Europe: Cross-Currents and Exchanges* (2012), *Confrontations and Interactions: Essays in Cultural Memory* (2011) and the *Irish University Review* (2011).

Lyman Tower Sargent is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He has been a visiting professor at universities in England and New Zealand. He was the founding Editor of *Utopian Studies* (1990-2004), and is author of a number of books, including *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* (2010), and *Utopian Literature in English: An Annotated Bibliography from 1516 to the Present* (2016); author of many articles; editor or co-editor of *The Utopia Reader*. 2nd ed. (2017), and *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (2013). He is the recipient of the Distinguished Scholar Award of both the Society for Utopian Studies and the Communal Studies Association. The Society for Utopian Studies has named this award the Lyman Tower Sargent Distinguished Scholar Award.

Miklós Sükösd is associate professor at the University of Copenhagen. He was the Academic Director of the Center for Media and Communication Studies at Central European University between 2004 and 2009. His publications include *Media Pluralism* (co-edited, 2014) and *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (with András Bozóki, 2006).

Zoltán Gábor Szűcs is a research fellow at the Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His current research focuses on political epistemology, political realism, and history of political thought. He published a book on the role of national history in the political discourses of the democratic transition in Hungary (*Az antalli pillanat*, 2010) and also co-edited a book with Attila Gyulai about the traditions of political realism (*A hatalom kódéban*, 2016). His English-language publications include papers about Hungarian political debates on constitution-making in the 1990s and the state of the art of political science in Hungary.

Fátima Vieira is associate professor at the University of Porto. She was the chairperson of the Utopian Studies Society between 2006 and 2016, and received the Larry E. Hough Distinguished Service Award in 2013. She published a number of important papers and edited volumes on utopian and dystopian topics, including *Dystopia(n) Matters* (2013).

Index

9/11, 202, 208–210, 213–217

A

Abensour, Miguel, 6
actuel, 66–67
Adorno, Theodor, 173, 178
agency, 110, 213n36, 243–45
anarchism, 36, 46, 77–80, 82–91,
93–99, 136, 171, 176–78;
Christian anarchism, 82, 87;
ideal anarchism, 82
anarcho-democracy, 77–78, 87,
97–98
anarcho-syndicalism, 78, 81–82,
85–86
anarchy, 78–80, 82, 85–86, 92–93,
97–98
apocalypse, 52, 58, 205, 209–10
apocalyptic, 52–53, 201–2, 204,
206–9
Arendt, Hannah, 20, 106, 109,
115
Aristotle, 3, 43, 97, 149
Arnold, Matthew, 125, 136, 138;
On the Study of Celtic Literature
(1867), 126, 136
Aron, Raymond, 53
Arts and Crafts Movement, 124,
133

Auden, W. H., 103, 109–10,
atomistic, 173, 239
autonomy, 45–46, 79, 89, 97, 108,
113, 177
avenir, 67–69

B

Bakunin, Mikhail, 91, 97
Barthes, Roland, 6, 7
Batthyány, Ervin, 77, 83–87
Bellah, Robert N., 146, 149–50
Bellamy, Edward, 34–35, 135,
141;
Looking Backward, 2000–1887
(1888), 34, 35, 135, 141
Benjamin, Walter, 108
Besant, Annie, 124, 140–41
Bibó, István, 78, 80, 87, 92–95,
98–99
Birri, Fernando, 64–65
Bloch, Ernst, 65, 67, 69, 240;
The Principle of Hope (1959), 240
blueprint, 9, 17, 58, 65, 67, 71–73,
82, 148, 155
Bolshevik, 51–52, 54–55, 91, 105–
6, 108–9
Bolshevism, 11–12, 49, 51, 53, 57,
88–90, 92
Brzezinski, Zbigniew, 105

C

capitalism, 34, 42, 78, 81–82,
84, 90, 94–95, 128–29, 133,
139–40
carcerotopia, 47
Carpenter, Edward, 83
Central Europe, 12–15, 77–83,
98–99, 161, 165
Chamberlain, Neville, 183, 189–
90
Cheynell, Francis, 68
civil religion, 145–50, 153–54,
156–57
Cloverfield (2008), 208, 210, 212–
13, 215–17
coercion, 44–49, 84, 86, 97–98,
172, 177
Cold War, 10, 12, 104, 201, 206
colonialism, 169–170
Communism, 9, 34–35, 43–44,
46, 48, 53–54, 82–83, 85–87,
90, 110, 132–33, 174, 196
cooperation, 4, 82–83, 86–88,
90–91, 95, 156, 239–40

D

Day-Lewis, Cecil, 183–84
Deleuze, Gilles, 66–67, 69, 72
De Tocqueville, Alexis, 97
Dias de Carvalho, Adalberto,
66–67, 73
dictatorship, 49, 79, 90, 92, 94–
95, 152
direct democracy, 96–97
Dühring, Eugene, 89
dystopia, 6–9, 35, 42, 44, 47, 56,
58, 115–16, 152, 161–166, 174,
176–77, 220–21, 242–46

E

Eastern Europe, 12, 66, 79, 81, 83
emotion, 55, 108, 112–13, 153, 166,
230, 246

Engels, Friedrich, 1, 121, 123–25,
240;
Socialism: Utopian and Scientific
(1880), 240
enhanced sociability, 43–44
Erdei, Ferenc, 81
escapism, 28–29, 241
eschatology, 14, 34, 106
eutopia, 6, 11, 34, 42, 63–64, 185,
197

F

Fabian Society, 131–33
Fascism, 9, 41, 90, 161, 171, 174–
76, 178
fiction, 2–5, 12, 116, 152, 167,
174, 177–78, 196, 206–8, 221–
22, 226, 235–36
Forster, E. M., 141;
A Passage to India (1924), 141
Foucault, Michel, 66, 103, 105
Fourier, Charles, 28, 32, 89, 240
Freire, Paulo, 72
Friedrich, Carl, 105
Fromm, Erich, 167
Frye, Northrop, 9, 10
Furter, Pierre, 69

G

Galeano, Eduardo, 64–67, 73
Game of Thrones (2011–), 219, 232
Gellner, Ernst, 239
Gemeinschaft, 44–45
Gentile, Giovanni, 174
George, Henry, 81
Gnosticism, 82, 87
Godzilla (1998), 209, 212
Golden Age, 29, 45, 53, 196
Gödel, Kurt, 171–72;
incompleteness theorem, 171
Gregory, Augusta [“Lady
Gregory” in text], 125, 126,
128
Guattari, Félix, 72

H

- Halfin, Igal, 103, 105–8, 110, 116
 Havel, Václav, 80–81, 99
 Hayek, Friedrich, 41, 48
 Hellbeck, Jochen, 103, 105–10, 116
 Hitler, Adolf, 41, 193, 195
 Hobbes, Thomas, 177, 223, 225;
 Leviathan (1651), 223, 225
homonoia, 149
 Howard, Ebenezer, 134, 162;
 Garden Cities of To-morrow (1902), 135;
 To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Social Reform (1898), 135
 Hume, David, 227
 Hungary, 15, 20n6, 81–82, 162, 174, 185–86, 189–98;
 anarchism in, 79, 85–87, 96–97, 176,
 utopianism in, 160–63,
 Huxley, Aldous, 8, 173, 177, 181–198;
 What Are You Going to Do About It? (1936), 182–88, 193–94, 196–97
 hybrid political ideas, 77–81, 91–92, 98–99

I

- I Am Legend* (2006), 208, 210–11
 ideology, 2, 10–11, 19–36, 86–90, 146, 174–76, 242–43
 imagination, 9–10, 34, 70, 115–16, 125–26, 138, 246
 individuality, 44, 81, 107, 155, 164, 246
 intellectuals, 12, 30, 80, 112, 188–89
 intentional community, 5, 44
 intentionalist, 244

J

- Jászi, Oszkár, 78, 80, 87–95, 98–99
 Jouvenel, Bertrand, 221, 225

K

- Kálló, Aladár, 185, 186, 188–98
 Karinthy, Frigyes, 162–63
 Kazo, 165, 170–173, 175
 Kissinger, Henry, 234–35
 Klein, Gérard, 68
 Kołakowski, Leszek, 9, 43, 49
 Konrád, György, 59, 80–81, 99
 Kotkin, Stephen, 105, 111
 Kropotkin, Peter, 83, 86
 Kumar, Krishan, 8, 142, 150–52, 165

L

- legitimacy, 188, 227–29
 Levitas, Ruth, 41–42, 54n41, 65, 72, 240n7
 liberalism, 46, 77, 80, 87, 104, 223–24
 liberal socialism, 77–78, 80, 87–90, 92–93, 95–96, 98
 liberal subjectivity, 104, 110–11, 113–14
 literary studies, 3–4, 6–7, 239–40
 Los Angeles, 205, 210
 Lukács, György, 53, 244
 Lynch, Kevin, 203–4

M

- Machiavelli, Niccoló, 220–21, 224, 228, 231;
 Machiavellian, 193, 219, 228, 230, 232–35
 Maler, Henri, 67
 Mannheim, Karl, 10, 11, 19–34, 53, 58, 99, 241, 242
 Diagnosis of Our Time (1943), 26

"Historicism" (1924), 24
Ideology and Utopia (1929), 10,
 19, 20, 22–24, 26, 241
*Man and Society in an Age of
 Reconstruction* (1941), 26
 Marin, Louis, 63–64, 66, 71–72
 Martin, George R. R., 14, 219–20,
 226, 236
A Song of Ice and Fire (1999–),
 219–21, 226–27, 233–34
 Marx, Karl, 45, 46, 47, 50, 51n31,
 72, 121–25, 129–32, 177, 196,
 240
Capital (1867), 121, 123, 129,
 131
 Matheson, Richard, 210, 211n32
 Mesopotamia, 203
 Middle Europe, 14, 181, 185
 Mill, Stuart, 8, 47n12
 millenarian, 42, 49, 52–53, 56–57,
 80, 206
 Molnar, Thomas, 13, 145, 153
 More, Sir Thomas, 1, 5, 43, 46–47,
 63–64, 132–133, 148, 164, 185,
 196, 220, 243, 247;
Utopia (1516), 1, 8, 43, 46, 57,
 132, 185, 243, 247
 Morris, William, 13, 83, 121–25,
 128–35, 142;
News from Nowhere (1890), 122–
 23, 128, 132, 135, 142
 Moser, Fernando de Mello, 64,
 70
 Mussolini, Benito, 174

N

Nabokov, Vladimir, 103, 192
 Nazism, 9, 41, 44, 50–52, 56, 175,
 183
 Németh, László, 80–81
 new man, 51n31, 108, 110
 new prince, 228–229, 233
 New York, 201, 202, 208–210,
 212, 214–17
 Nietzsche, Friedrich, 51n31, 82

O

Oppenheimer, Franz, 89
 orientalism, 104, 169
 Orwell, George, 52, 103–4, 108,
 111–14, 116, 168, 246;
1984 (1949), 103–104, 106, 112,
 115–16, 168
 Owen, David, 89, 240

P

pacifism, 181–184, 188, 195
 Patočka, Jan, 99
 Peace Pledge Union, 181–183, 188
Planet of the Apes (1968), 204
 Plato, 2, 43, 46–48, 57, 149, 152;
Republic, 46, 57, 149, 152
 political realism, 219–22, 233
 political religion, 42, 50–52, 56,
 147–48
 political science, 11–12, 240
 political virtue, 46, 224, 233
 Popper, Karl, 1, 9, 11, 15, 48–49,
 57, 64, 65
 positivism, 164, 167, 174
 post-apocalyptic, 201–2, 204–7,
 210, 212–13, 217
 post-structuralism, 7, 64, 103–4,
 116
 prospective attitude, 11, 69
 Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph, 89, 91

R

rationality, 65, 163, 166, 169, 243
 Rawls, John, 33, 223
 Reade, William Winwood, 151
 referentiality, 7, 169
 Ricoeur, Paul, 19, 20, 27–34, 243;
Lectures on Ideology and Utopia
 (1986), 27, 29–32
 Ronen, Ruth, 3, 240n7
 Rorty, Richard, 114–15
 Rothermere, First Vicount of, 186,
 188, 191n25

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 45, 146–49, 153–54, 157
 Ruskin, John, 123–24, 130
 Russia, 79–80, 105–7, 181, 193, 235

S

Said, Edward, 169
 salvation, 56, 79, 115, 147
 samurai, 152–154, 157
 Santos, Boaventura de Sousa, 70
 Sargent, Lyman Tower, 5, 10, 42, 65, 241;
 Contemporary Political Ideologies (1969), 36
 Schmitt, Jenő Henrik, 77, 82–83, 86–87, 176
 Selbin, Eric, 244
 self-management, 95–96
 Seton-Watson, Robert William, 183
 Shaw, George Bernard, 121–22, 124, 130–34, 136, 137, 139, 140–42;
 Fabian Essays in Socialism (1889), 131;
 John Bull's Other Island (1904), 13, 122, 133, 134, 137, 140
 Skocpol, Theda, 244
 social engineering, 9, 47–48, 64
 Socialism, 34–36, 46, 77–99, 113, 121–25, 128–33, 140–41, 150–52, 240
 solidarity, 57, 82–85, 106, 114
Solidarność (Polish Solidarity movement), 81, 96
 Sontag, Susan, 206
 Soviet, 12, 98, 103–13, 115–16
 Soviet Union, 66, 103–6, 111–13, 116
 Stalin, 41, 49;
 Stalinism, 41–42, 50, 54, 103, 105–6, 111, 115
 statism, 48, 89
 Steiner, George, 3, 5

Swift, Jonathan, 8n21, 132–33, 162–64, 170;
 Gulliver's Travels (1726), 132–33, 162–64
 symbolism, 166–69, 204
 Szabó, Ervin, 77, 80, 85, 86, 91, 92
 Szathmári, Sándor, 161–64, 170–76;
 A Voyage to Kazohinia (1941), 161–76
 Szelényi, Iván, 99

T

Tavares, Gonçalo M., 70
 Thass-Thienemann, Theodore, 167
 Third way, 77, 96
 Thucydides, 219, 221, 225
 Timmermans, Benoît, 68
Tír na nÓg, 125–27, 141
 Tolstoy, Leo, 82–83, 176
 totalitarianism, 41–42, 47–51, 55–57, 104–5, 111–15, 161, 172, 175–76
 trauma, 14, 201–2, 207–17
 Trianon, Treaty of, 91, 186, 190, 195

U

utilitarianism, 95, 115, 154, 166–67, 172
 utopia,
 ambiguity of, 5–6, 164;
 and authorial intention, 6–8;
 anti-utopian, 9, 14, 64, 71, 222, 240–41;
 hybrid utopia, 77, 99;
 philosophical utopia, 66–68, 70–73;
 political utopia, 66–67, 71–73, 98;
 utopian discourse, 30, 63–64, 244;
 utopianism, 2, 5, 9–13, 41–43, 47–50, 56–57, 66, 140, 142, 161–62, 220–22, 239–42

V

violence, 43–44, 47–48, 55–56,
83–85, 110;
non-violence, 82, 93

W

Webb, Darren, 72–73
Webb, Sidney, 121
Weber, Alfred, 23
Weber, Max, 28, 220, 224
Wells, H. G., 58, 59, 150–52,
154–57, 213;
A Modern Utopia (1900), 13,
152–54, 157;
The Open Conspiracy (1928), 13,
154, 156–57;
The Time Machine (1895), 152;
War of the Worlds (1898), 213
White, Hayden, 3, 4, 235
White, Kevin, 234–36
Whitebrook, Maureen, 243–244

Wolff, Robert, 22n11, 177–78
World State, 152–54, 156–57
World Trade Center, 209, 214–15

Y

Yeats, William Butler, 122, 124–
30, 133–34, 137, 141–42;
Cathleen ni Houlihan (1902), 122,
128, 129n23;
The Countess Cathleen (1892), 122,
129;
The Land of Heart's Desire (1894),
122, 127, 134;
“Sailing to Byzantium” (1928),
142;
The Wanderings of Oisín (1889),
122, 126, 141–42

Z

Zamyatin, Yevgeny, 103, 108, 161,
246